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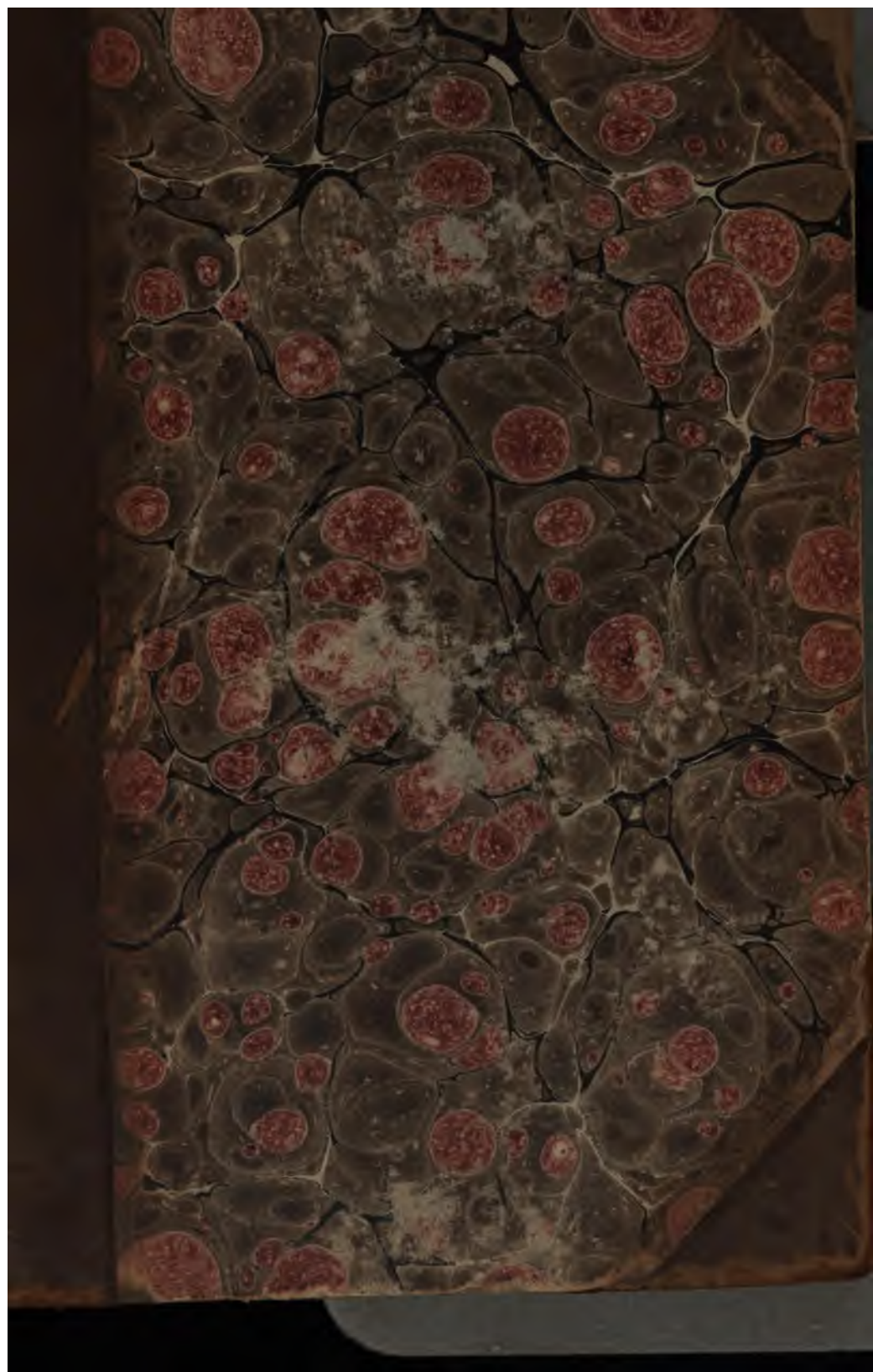
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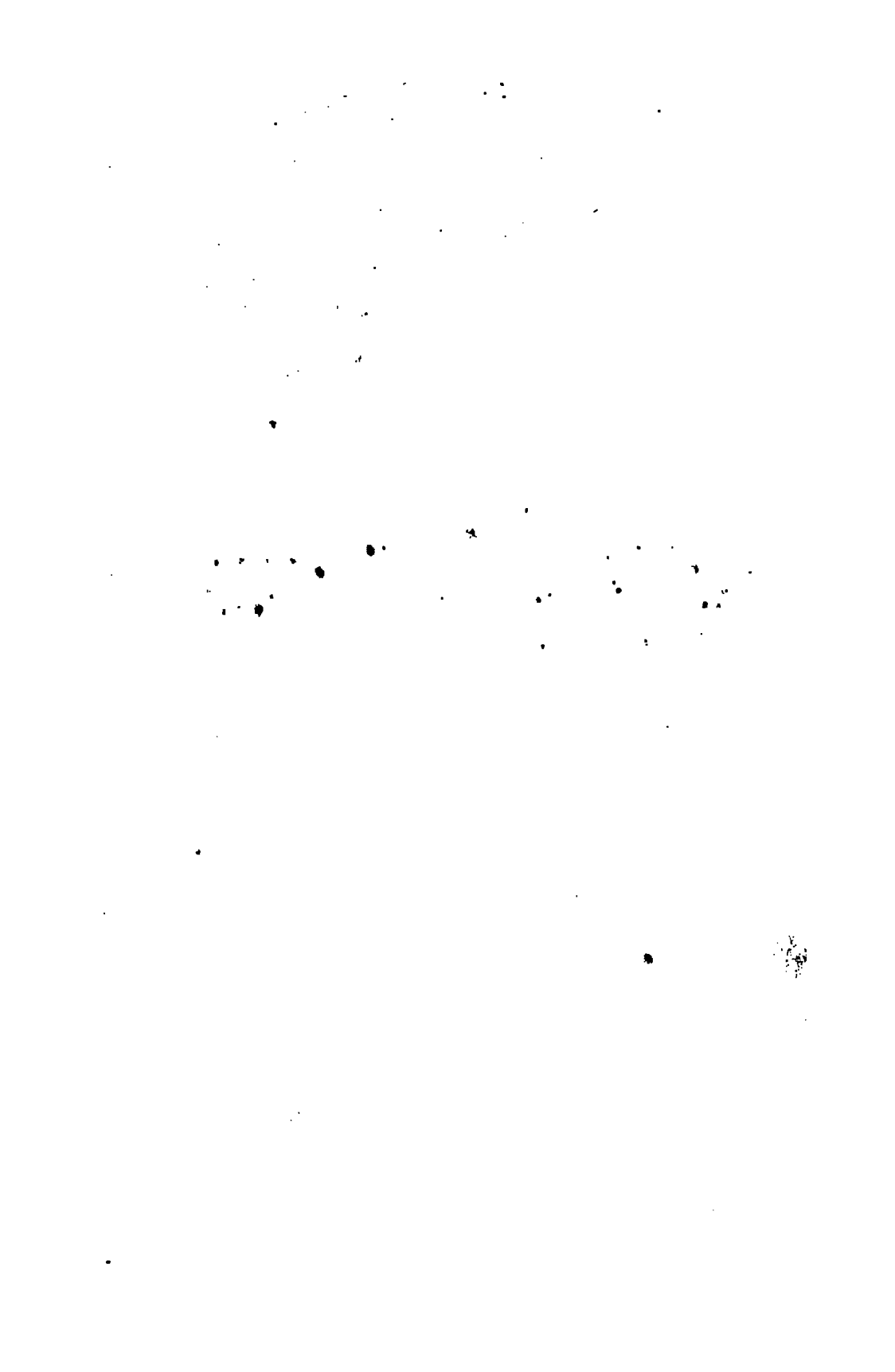


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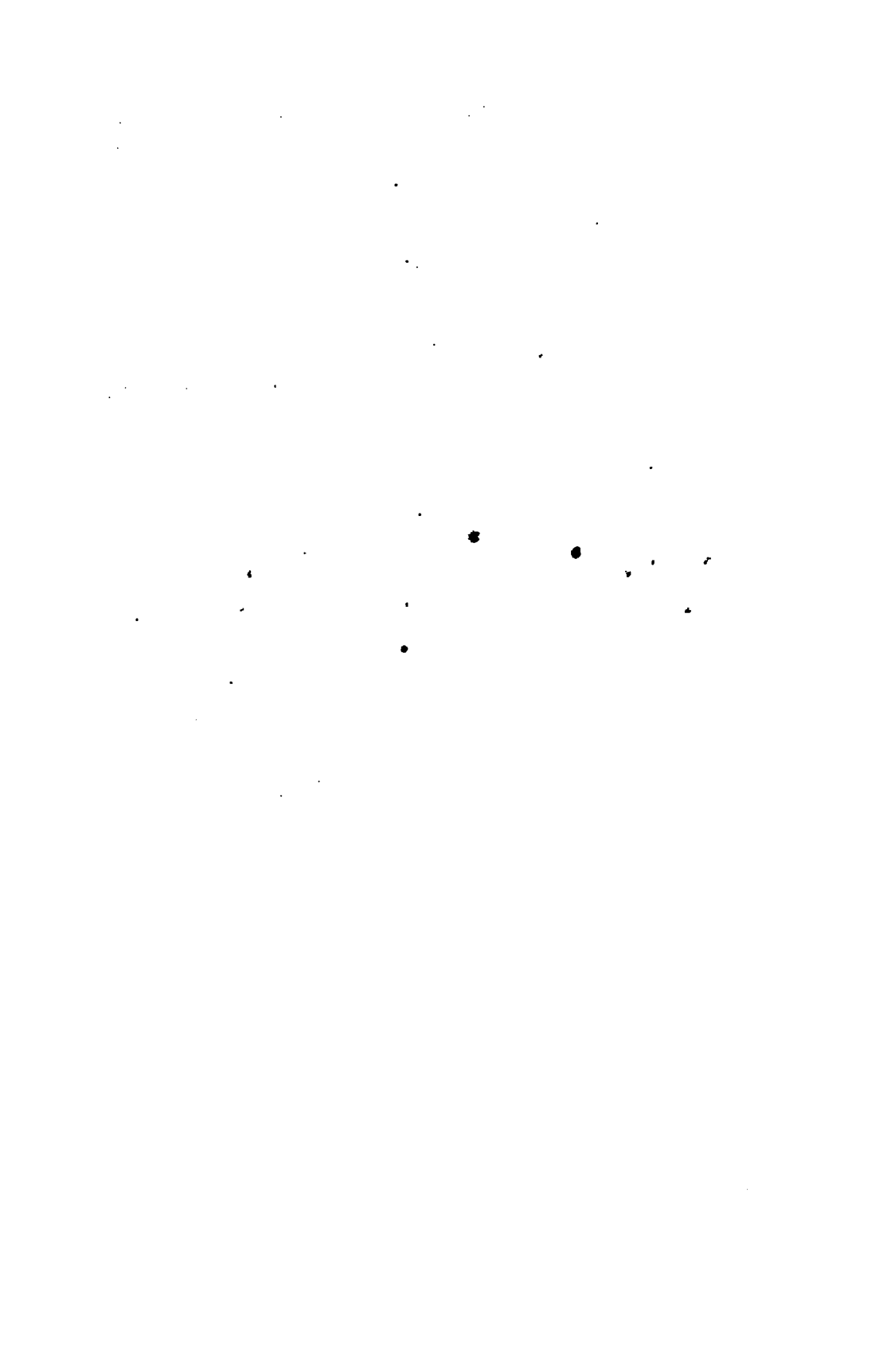
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DISSERTATIONS

VINDICATING

THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND,

WITH REGARD TO

SOME ESSENTIAL POINTS

OF

POLITY AND. DOCTRINE.

BY THE
REV. JOHN SINCLAIR, A.M.

OF PEMBROKE COLLEGE, OXFORD, FELLOW OF THE ROYAL SOCIETY OF EDINBURGH,
AND MINISTER OF ST. PAUL'S CHAPEL, EDINBURGH.



LONDON:

PRINTED FOR J. G. & F. RIVINGTON,

ST. PAUL'S CHURCH YARD, AND WATERLOO PLACE, PALL MALL;

AND SOLD BY BELL & BRADFUTE, EDINBURGH.

1833.

588.

L O N D O N :
GILBERT AND RIVINGTON, PRINTERS,
ST. JOHN'S SQUARE.

P R E F A C E.

THE necessity for some work explaining in a popular form the peculiarities of the Church of England in respect to doctrine, to rules of faith, to discipline, and public worship, has for some time been impressed upon the mind of the author. The unhappy continuance of a hostile spirit, both among Roman Catholics and Protestant Dissenters, notwithstanding the repeated measures of conciliation taken by the legislature, has not tended to efface that impression. Publications of a tendency to disparage both in England and Ireland our established ecclesiastical institutions, and to withdraw from them the affections of the nation, seem to have increased in number, and perhaps in virulence, proportionably as the political causes of complaint and hostility have diminished.

Under these circumstances the appearance of a Theological series, edited as well as written by the most distinguished luminaries of our Anglican Church, gave the author hopes that some writer of acknowledged learning and ability, would have availed himself of so obvious a channel for conveying, in a cheap and compendious form, such materials as would furnish ordinary readers with means of reply, when exposed to insinuations or arguments from the host of miscellaneous objectors by whom our establishment is assailed. Disappointed in these hopes, the author was led to think, (on being invited to undertake some contribution for the work just mentioned,) that the task which he had expected to see fulfilled by others had better be performed imperfectly by himself, than remain unperformed altogether. He accordingly prepared the present volume with a view to its insertion in that valuable and well-timed miscellany. When afterwards he ascertained from the Editors that their plan necessarily restricted each volume to one subject, and required that doctrine and polity should be discussed in separate publications ; he was apprehensive that whatever might be the case with others who enjoy the

enviable talent of giving popular interest to the driest subjects, he would not himself be able, (throughout an entire volume of the description required,) to fix the attention of the general reader on Church polity alone. He has thought it therefore advisable, with the concurrence of his excellent friends, the reverend Editors of the Theological Library, to publish the following dissertations in their present independent form.

The kind of publication which the author thinks most likely to be useful is of such a rudimental and familiar character, as may be perfectly intelligible to ordinary understandings, and although, in these pages, quotations in the original languages of Christian antiquity have been occasionally made, such passages will not be found essential for comprehending his line of argument. They have rather been introduced from a desire to prove himself correct, and to prevent the least suspicion of unfairness. If in any instance his translations have been imperfect, the reader of education will have no difficulty in discovering the error.

Writing as the author at first intended, for a work published in London, and designed for members of the English establishment, he assumed in general

the language of an English clergyman ; though the present sphere of his professional labours is without the territorial limits of the Anglican church. He has been induced to continue this method of communication, not merely as more convenient, but also from the respect which he naturally entertains for the establishment in Scotland ; the reputation of whose ministers, for eloquence and talent, as well as piety, forms a pure and sacred source of honour to his native country.

In the first of the following dissertations on the subject of Church polity, he has stated as succinctly as that extensive subject would permit, the whole argument for *Episcopacy*, both from Scripture and antiquity. Without referring to individuals, in the present day, who have written against this important Apostolical institution, he has endeavoured to condense their objections, and to offer, (in a manner impossible to be thought personally offensive,) a satisfactory refutation.

Next to Church polity he considered forms of Divine worship to require discussion. On this topic he has confined himself at present to a general view of *Liturgies*. Another treatise in continuation, (for which he has already collected materials, and

which bears a particular reference to the Church of England liturgy,) may, he conceives, be more advantageously laid before the public at some future opportunity, after the doctrines have been vindicated, of which that liturgy must be regarded as an invaluable compendium.

As the chief weapon of assault in the hands of the Romanist is the assumed authority of his Church, the next subject introduced is *Infallibility*. Under this title the author has enumerated the various and insuperable difficulties which beset the Romish assailant in his assertion of that lofty claim: opportunity at the same time is taken of bringing forward and exposing other not less dangerous pretensions; and of pointing out, from the canons of the Church of England, a safe and Scriptural guide for the attainment of religious truth.

The last dissertation here published is on the doctrine of *Mediation*. The greater number of heretical opinions at the present day, and, indeed, at all times throughout Christendom have arisen from regarding in a partial and confined view the great principle of atonement; and from limiting attention to one only among the offices of Christ. As the office of Mediator includes them all, a dis-

cussion of his Mediatorial character is calculated to repel on either side, the aggressions of our Socinian and Antinomian adversaries. Throughout the whole essay general expressions are systematically employed, and all allusion to those articles of belief respecting which the members of the Church have adopted different explanations, is carefully avoided.

Thus four subjects have been chosen for vindication in this volume. First, the form of Church polity in the English establishment; secondly, our received mode of Divine worship; thirdly, the rules for the attainment of sound doctrine; and fourthly, the leading doctrines themselves, which the observance of those rules has led the Church to adopt and promulgate.

Other topics in addition to those just specified might have been introduced; but the author, besides a natural dread, at his first appearance before the public, of abusing unreasonably the patience of his readers, feels desirous for the present to confine himself to general and introductory branches of ecclesiastical discipline. On one subject, however, connected with establishments, he feels assured that any efforts from him must be for ever super-

sed by the admirable vindication of Ecclesiastical endowments from the pen of an eminent professor ; whose genius, ever piously and eloquently active, will long, it is hoped, be continued to his admiring country, and to the establishment which he adorns. The author cannot conclude without expressing his hope, that the sentiments of an individual so highly valued by our dissenting brethren as Dr. Chalmers, on the subject of establishments, will soften their asperities, and lead their minds to greater delicacy and hesitation in opposing long-established Christian institutions.

133, *George Street, Edinburgh*, 1832.

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DISSERTATION I.

ON EPISCOPACY.

CHAPTER I.

"The foul practices which have been used for the overthrow of Bishops, may, perhaps, wax bold in process of time, to give the like assault even there, from whence at this present they are most seconded. Nor let it over-dismay them who suffer such things at the hands of this most unkind world, to see that heavenly estate and dignity thus conculcated, in regard whereof so many their predecessors were no less esteemed than if they had not been men, but angels amongst men. With former Bishops it was as with Job, in the days of that prosperity which at large he describeth, saying, 'Unto me men gave ear; they waited and held their tongue at my counsel; after my words they replied not; I appointed out their way, and did sit as chief: I dwelt as it had been a king in an army.'—At this day the case is otherwise with them; and yet no otherwise than with the self-same Job at what time the alteration of his estate wrested these contrary speeches from him; 'But now they that are younger than I mock at me; the children of fools, and offspring of slaves, creatures more base than the earth they tread on; such as if they did shew their heads, young and old would shout at them and chase them through the street with a cry, their song I am, I am a theme for them to talk on.' An injury less grievous, if it were not offered by them whom Satan had through his fraud and subtilty so far beguiled, as to make them imagine herein they do unto God a part of most faithful service. Whereas the Lord in truth, whom they serve herein, is, as St. Cyprian telleth them, like not Christ (for he it is that doth appoint and protect Bishops) but rather Christ's adversary and enemy of his Church. A thousand five hundred years and upwards the church of Christ hath now continued under the sacred regiment of Bishops. Neither for so long hath Christianity been ever planted in any kingdom throughout the world but with this kind of government alone; which to have been ordained of God, I am for mine own part even as resolutely persuaded, as that any other kind of government in the world whatsoever is of God."—*Hooker. Eccles. Polity.*

DISS. I.

CHAP. I.

THREE distinct ecclesiastical orders existed at the period of the Reformation, throughout every part of the Christian world, under the name of Bishops,

Episcopacy
universal
till the time
of the Re-
formation.

DISS. I.
CHAP. I.

Priests, and Deacons. To each of these three orders were allotted separate duties, and different degrees of rank and power. Not only among all the churches subject, in the west, to the Roman Pontiff; and in the east and south, to the Patriarchs of Antioch, Byzantium, and Alexandria; but also among the numerous Christian societies who rejected their doctrine and disowned their authority, were the three orders in question established and maintained. The polity of the Nestorians, Monothelites, and Armenians, on one side of Christendom, as well as of the Albigenses, Waldenses, and Bohemians, on the other, was uniformly episcopal: however widely most of these numerous sectaries were opposed to the rest, and to the great communities from which they separated. The most industrious explorer of Church antiquity, searching from the shores of the Atlantic, to those of the Indian Ocean, from Abyssinia to Scandinavia, has never yet distinctly traced a single Church, in which a hierarchy possessed of diocesan rights and privileges did not, at the period here referred to, prevail¹.

Apostoli-
cally insti-
tuted:

As the Christian hierarchy were in actual and universal possession of these peculiar rights and privileges, so they claimed them also for their ancient and undisputed inheritance; an inheritance transmitted and held, by the venerable title of prescription, during fifteen centuries; and by

¹ See note (A), at the end of the volume. See also in confirmation of this assertion, Hooker and Charles Leslie.

the still more venerable and sacred tenure of apostolical institution.

DISS. I.
CHAP. I.

Nor is this all. For when the general adherence of the episcopal order to the errors and corruptions of the Romish creed, presented, in some countries, formidable obstacles against the progress of Reformation; those pious Presbyters who had engaged in that great work, and who were thus reduced to the necessity of abandoning their design, or of contriving a new system of Church government and discipline, adopted this latter alternative with reluctance. They deplored as a calamity, the necessity for this innovation. They regarded it as defensible mainly on the ground of political expediency. They appear to have been overborne equally by the governors and the governed; by the jealousy and cupidity of rulers, as well as by the prejudices and clamours of the multitude, whom the obstinacy and mismanagement of their spiritual superiors had goaded almost to frenzy. In that celebrated symbol of faith, the earliest declaration of doctrine among Protestants, entitled the "Augsburg Confession," these conscientious and reluctant innovators, express openly their sorrow that the canonical form of Church government which they earnestly desired to maintain, should, in some places, have been dissolved¹. In another passage of the same important record they thus express themselves:—"Now here again we

Reluctantly
departed
from.

Augsburg
confession.

¹ *Quam nos magnopere conservare cupiebamus.*—See Bishop Hall's "Episcopacy by Divine Right," p. 11.

DISS. I. desire to testify to the world that we would willingly preserve the ecclesiastical and canonical government, if the Bishops would only cease to exercise cruelty upon our churches. This our desire will excuse us before God, before all the world, and unto all posterity; that it may not be justly imputed unto us that the authority of Bishops is impaired amongst us; when men shall hear and read that we, earnestly deprecating the unjust cruelty of the Bishops, could obtain no equal measure at their hands¹.” The venerable Melancthon, by whom this Confession was drawn up, thus expresses in an epistle to Luther the congruity of his own private sentiments with those of this public document. “I know not,” he says, “with what face we can refuse Bishops, if they will suffer us to have purity of doctrine².” And he elsewhere quotes his illustrious correspondent as maintaining the same opinion. His words are (in allusion to this question), “Luther did always judge as I do³.”

Melancthon.

Luther.

The sentiments of allegiance to the episcopal system of Church polity, here expressed by the original Protestants in Germany, were promulgated with equal earnestness by other eminent Reformers, who, under the pressure of the same necessity, departed from a system which they revered.—Calvin reports himself to have subscribed willingly

Calvin.

¹ Ibid. p. 11.

² See Brett “on Church Government,” p. 121.

³ Ibid. in l. c.

and heartily to the confession above quoted¹. “Bishops,” says he, in another passage of his writings, “have invented no other form of governing the Church but such as the Lord hath prescribed by his own word.” Again, in another place, after describing the character of a truly Christian Bishop, he subjoins (in that strong language for which he was remarkable), “I should account those men deserving of every the severest anathema, who do not submit themselves reverently and with all obedience to such a hierarchy².” This great man was by no means adverse to a considerable variety of grades in the Church. Speaking of Metropolitans or Primates, he observes that their appointment was of primitive institution, “to the end that the Bishops might, by reason of this bond of concord, preserve a closer union among themselves³.” And lest the supremacy of the

DISS. I.
CHAP. I.

¹ The words of Calvin are,—*cui pridem volens ac libens subscripsi*.—Vid. Epist. ad Martin Schaling, quoted by Barbon in the Preface to his work on Liturgies.

² *Talem si nobis hierarchiam exhibeant in quâ sic emineant episcopi ut Christo subesse non recusent, ut ab illo tanquam unico capite pendeant, et ad ipsum referantur,—tum vero nullo non anathemate dignos fatear, si qui erunt qui non eam reverenter summâque obedientiâ observant.*—Tractat. de Reform. Eccles.

³ *Vetus ecclesia Patriarchas instituit, et singulis etiam provinciis quosdam attribuit primatus ut hoc concordie vinculo melius inter se devincti manerent episcopi. Quemadmodum si hodie illustrissimo Poloniæ regno unus præesset Archiepiscopus, non qui dominaret in reliquos, vel jus ab illis ereptum arrogaret, sed qui ordinis causâ in Synodis primum teneret locum, et sanctam inter collegas suos et fratres unitatem fovaret. Essent denique provin-*

- DISS. I. Roman Pontiff should be inferred from this concession, he makes the following distinction. "To bear a moderate rule is a very different thing from comprehending under one vast dominion, the whole circuit of the world¹." The same favourable view of episcopacy was entertained by other celebrated fathers of the Genevan church.
- CHAP. I.

 Calvin's distinction between the Pontificate and the Episcopate.
- Bucer. Bucer on all occasions expressed his anxiety, that those churches which enjoyed an episcopal constitution, should not, without sufficient reason, relinquish this advantage ; nor obliterate, by excessive change, their resemblance to the Christian communities founded by the Apostles. In his book, *De Regno Christi*, he writes to this effect. " We see by the constant practice of the Church, even from the time of the Apostles, how it hath pleased the Holy Ghost, that among the ministers to whom the government of the Church is especially committed, one individual should have the chief management both of the churches and of the whole ministry, and should, in that management, take precedence of all his brethren. For which reason the title of Bishop is employed to designate a chief spiritual governor." ² Beza, the friend likewise of Calvin, and one among the most learned and indefatigable commentators upon Scripture, writing
- Beza.

ciales vel urbani Episcopi, &c.—Calvin, *Seren^{mo}. Regi Polon.* p. 190.

¹ *Aliud est moderatum gerere honorem, quam totum terrarum orbem immenso imperio complecti.*—Vid. *Epist. exc.*

² See also Brett on Church Government. Chap. v. page 85.

to the English Primate in the name of the Genevan Church, warmly eulogizes the church polity of England. He elsewhere refers emphatically to the authority of Bishops and Archbishops in our English establishment, and pronounces what we may consider his benediction. "Let England enjoy, by all means, that special benefit of God, and God grant that it may be perpetual unto her¹." In another passage he describes it as a thing incredible, that the episcopal order should be rejected. "If," says he, "there be any who reject altogether episcopal jurisdiction (a thing I can hardly be persuaded of), God forbid that any one in his senses should give way to the madness of such men²."

DISS. I.

CHAP. I.

Passing from Geneva to the East of Europe, we find the same attachment for the primitive constitution of the Church. In the book of ecclesiastical canons agreed upon by the Reformers of Poland, and Hungary, anno 1623, the following oath of canonical obedience was required of every candidate for admission to Deacon's orders.—"I. N. N. swear before the living God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, and before his Holy Angels, that I shall yield unto the Bishop

Reformers
of Poland
and Hun-
gary.

¹ See Durel's view of the Reformed Churches, 4to, 1662. p. 280.

² *Si qui sunt (quod sanè mihi non faciliè persuaseris) qui omnem episcoporum ordinem rejiciant, absit ut quisquam sanæ mentis furoribus illorum assentiatur.* Theod. Beza ad tractat. de minist. Ev. gradibus ad Hadr. Sarav. Belgæ editam.

DISS. I.
CHAP. I.

and Presbyters (*senioribus*) all due obedience, as unto my superiors. So help me God¹.” In another canon of the same church and synod, after enumerating the several authorities from Scripture for different ranks in the ministry, the assembled Fathers make a declaration as follows. “We also do acknowledge in our churches the orders and degrees aforementioned, insomuch that we have certain Bishops, as also Presbyters eminently so called, or Seniors, who ought to govern, according to established rules, the other persons termed in Scripture Ministers of God, and Pastors of the Churches².”

Reformers
of Italy.

Among the Reformers of Italy, there was the same respect for episcopacy as among those already noticed of Germany and Switzerland. Jerome Zanchius, a very learned native of the Venetian territory, in his thesis on the true method of Reforming the Church³, makes this strong protestation.

Zanchius.

¹ *Ego N.N. juro coram Deo vivo, &c. Episcopo et senioribus tanquam superioribus meis debitam obedientiam præstiturus. Sic me Deus adjuvet.*—Canon. Eccl. Synod. Comiathinæ in Hungariâ. Class iii. Can. 8.

² *Nos quoque in ecclesiis nostris hos ordines vel gradus ita agnoscimus, ut certos habeamus Episcopos, Presbyteros item eminenter sic dictos, seu seniores, qui cæteros Dei ministros et ecclesiarum pastores scripturæ phrasi sic vocatos, certis legibus regere debeant.*—*Ibid.* Can. 2.

³ His Treatise is entitled, “*De verâ Reformandarum Ecclesiarum Ratione.*” He was by some reputed among the most learned of Calvin’s contemporaries. He succeeded Peter Martyr at Strasburg, when the latter, in 1549, was called over by King Edward the Sixth to be Professor of Divinity at Oxford.

"I profess before God, that in my conscience, I repute them no other than schismatics who make it a part of Reformation of the Church to have no Bishops, who should preside over their Presbyters in degree of authority, *where this may be had*. Furthermore, with Mr. Calvin, I deem them worthy of all manner of anathemas, as many as will not be subject to that Hierarchy which submits itself to the Lord Jesus¹." In another work he argues the same point at greater length. Speaking of the different orders established in the Church, "I believe," he says, "that such things as have been decreed and received by the holy Fathers, assembled in the name of the Lord with a general consent of all, without any contradiction of holy writ; I say, I believe that such things (although they be not of the same authority with the Holy Scripture) are also of the Holy Ghost. Hence it is, that I neither can, nor dare disapprove, with a good conscience, things of that nature. Now, what is more certain out of histories, councils, and all the writings of the Fathers, than those orders of ministers of which we have said, that they were established and received in the Church by the common consent of the whole Christian commonwealth? And who am I that I should disapprove what the whole Church hath approved²?"

DISS. I.

CHAP. I.

¹ Ibid.—And see also his Tract de Necessitate Reformandæ Ecclesiæ," quoted by Barbon.

² *Credo enim quæ a piis Patribus, in nomine Domini congregatis, communi omnium consensu, citra ullam sacrarum literarum*

DISS. I.

CHAP. I.

Reformers
of Scandi-
navia.

Respecting the Lutheran churches of the North, throughout Sweden, Norway, and Denmark, we need here observe no more than that they adopted and acted upon the episcopalian principles of the Augsburg confession already quoted.

Reformers
of Scotland.

Proceeding to Scotland, we find that even Knox, the uncompromising reformer of that country, had no desire to introduce a needless innovation; but adopting the ecclesiastical axiom of Calvin, that "parity breedeth confusion," was desirous to have maintained a form of Church Polity more agreeable to the primitive model than the prejudices of the Scottish people would allow. Indeed, the superintendents or Bishops (for the latter term is a translation of the former) whom Knox contributed to establish in Scotland, were invested with such ample powers, that many Prelates, in later times, publicly declared their perfect readiness to be satisfied with the same jurisdiction¹. Knox in his own

Knox.

contradictionem definita et recepta fuerunt: ea etiam (quanquam haud ejusdem cum sacris literis auctoritatis), a Spiritu Sancto esse; ea ego improbare, nec velim, nec audeam bonâ conscientiâ. Zanch. in Observ. ad suam ipsius confessionem in cap. 25, ad Aphor. 10 et 11, quoted by Durel, p. 252, and referred to by Hooker, Ecc. Pol. book vii. §. 11.

¹ Among various authorities, we may specify the three following: Archbishop Spottiswood, in his "Refutatio Libelli," A. D. 1620; Lindsay Bishop of Brechin, in his "True Narrative," A. D. 1618; and Maxwell first Bishop of Ross, and afterwards Archbishop of Tuam, in his "Episcopacy not abjured in Scotland."—See Bishop Sage's Vindication, Chapter IV.

Knox refused a bishoprick offered him by Edward VI., and his

life describes himself as having been for some years an officiating minister of the Church of England, both at Berwick and at Newcastle. He is stated by his biographers to have been chaplain to King Edward the Sixth, at a time when, as now, the common prayer-book contained in the introduction to the ordinal for consecration the following declaration : “ It is evident unto all men diligently reading holy Scriptures and ancient authors, that from the Apostles’ times there have been these orders of ministers in Christ’s Church, Bishops, Priests, and Deacons.” The family of this great Scotch reformer gave hereditary proof of episcopal partiality by becoming members and ministers of the English establishment¹.

DISS. I.
CHAP. I.

To the above testimonies might be added others to an unlimited extent. We have only selected

refusal has been interpreted into an evidence of his aversion to Episcopal government. But he himself assigns a different reason for that act of self-denial. In a private letter to Mrs. Bowes (his mother-in-law), he ascribes his forbearance to “ the foresight of trouble to come,” alluding to the anticipated persecutions under Mary. He elsewhere complains that Bishops did not oftener come forward as preachers, and that no minister had authority, by the existing laws of England, to prevent the unworthy from participating the Sacrament, which he pronounces to be “ a chief part” of the ministerial office.—See Knox’s *Historie*. Fol.

¹ His two sons, Nathaniel and Eleazer, were sent for their education to England. Both of them were matriculated at St. John’s College, Cambridge, A. D. 1572, and both became Fellows of that Society : the former remained till his death, A. D. 1580 ; the latter was instituted to the living of Clacton Magna, and dying A. D. 1591, was buried at St. John’s College.

DISS. I.
CHAP. I.

Reformers
of Holland
and the Low
countries.

Grotius.

the most prominent out of the different countries of Christian Europe. We must not conclude, however, without some notice of one further eminent individual, and of one other remarkable Synod connected with a distinguished seat of theological learning. Grotius, the celebrated lawyer and statesman, the acute metaphysician and divine, well known to all the Christian world as an able “defender of the Faith,” thus sums up the argument between the Episcopalian writers and their adversaries in his time. “So light and foolish is what the latter have put forth in answer to the former, that to have read the one is to have already refuted the other : especially touching the angels of the Churches, concerning whom, that which the disturbers of ecclesiastical order bring, is so absurd and contrary to the sacred text itself, that it deserves not confutation¹.” In another work he remarks that “Episcopacy had its beginning in the apostolic times.”—“The Bishop is of approved Divine right. For this assertion the Divine apocalypse affords an irrefragable argument.”—“The histories of all times manifest the vast advantages that have accrued to the Church by Episcopacy.”—“Those who think Episcopacy repugnant to God’s will, must condemn the whole primitive Church of folly and impiety².”

¹ Discussio de Primatu Papæ.

² Grot. de imper. Summ. Potest. circa sacra. Cap. XI. sect. 5 ; also Brett on Church Government, and note (B) at the end of the volume.

To quote, as was proposed, one more authority from the same quarter—namely, Holland—and to end as we began, with the judgment of an Assembly of Divines: the Presbyterian Synod of Dort, called together for the establishment of Calvinism in that country, bear the same testimony with Grotius, who belonged to the Arminian party, their opposers. The Synod, on being urged by the English Church respecting the necessity of Episcopal government on the Apostolic plan, replied, that “they had a great honour for the Church of England, and heartily wished that they could establish themselves upon this model; lamenting that they had no prospect of such a happiness; and since the civil government had made their desires impracticable, they hoped God would be merciful to them¹.”

DISS. I.
CHAP. I.

Synod of
Dort.

The reader may perhaps imagine that we have

¹ Collier's Eccles. Hist. Vol. II. p. 718.

The testimonies in the text have reference principally to the subject of Episcopacy, but I cannot forbear subjoining an eulogium from the celebrated M. Daillé, on the entire polity of the Anglican Church. “As to the Church of England, purged from foreign wicked superstitious worships and errors, either impious or dangerous, by the rule of the Divine Scripture; approved of by many and illustrious martyrs; abounding with piety towards God, and charity towards men, and with most frequent examples of good works; flourishing with an increase of most learned and wise men from the beginning of the reformation to this time: I have always had it in true and just esteem, and till I die, I shall continue in the same due veneration of it.”—De Confess. advers. H. Hammond, c. i. p. 97. 98.

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adduced supernumerary evidences for establishing this point ; but it is important for the purposes of this essay to ascertain the opinions of the principal reformers, while their minds were as yet neither biassed by party spirit, nor heated in the struggles of controversy.

Origin of
anti-episco-
palian prin-
ciples.

The veneration for Episcopacy entertained at first by persons whom necessity compelled to the adoption of a different system, could not be expected to continue long. Hostility to the Church of Rome would naturally be increased by opposition and persecution. It would seem desirable, in the tumultuous conflict, not only of words, but frequently of the sword ; when strife not only raged in the polemic theatre, but in the field of blood ; and when, to a multitude of sufferers by inquisitorial torture, in the dungeon, on the scaffold, or at the stake, were added the victims of open war ; to remove as far as possible, both in doctrine and in discipline, from that detested communion. It would also be thought expedient, by persons thus severely tried, to stand on higher ground, with respect to Church polity, than the ground of mere necessity ; and to make some show of argument from Scripture, or from primitive antiquity, in behalf of the new constitution which had been devised. Accordingly, many of those very persons whose writings have been quoted, spoke afterwards with far less favour of the ancient system for which they originally professed and felt so much esteem. The enmity of their disciples grew more and more

decided and unequivocal. The authority of Bishops was represented as a presumptuous encroachment on the rights and privileges conveyed to Presbyters by the apostles. Popery and Prelacy were declared to be so closely in alliance, as even to be virtually synonymous. For the space of above two centuries and a half, up to our present times, a regular system of aggressive warfare has been maintained by the scholars and successors of Calvin, against that very form of Church government, respecting which we have seen their great master declaring, that the man was worthy of all condemnation, who should not reverently and with the utmost deference receive it.

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The question then proposed for examination in this essay is, whether the opinions on the subject of Episcopacy entertained by the founders of the anti-episcopal system, or the opinions entertained by their successors, were more correct : in other words, whether an ecclesiastical constitution prevailing, as we have seen, at the period of the reformation, throughout the whole Christian world ; handed down from remote antiquity as an apostolical institution ; and nowhere departed from but by necessity : did possess, in reality, the high origin which it claimed, and was actually entitled to the universal reverence which it received.

Statement
of the ques-
tion.

But before examining the question, there are three particulars necessary to be premised, in reference to the kind and degree of proof in this case to be expected ; that the examiner may be pro-

Three pre-
liminary
observa-
tions.

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perly prepared to enter on the discussion. For though the subject is not necessarily obscure, yet from inattention to the meaning of ancient words and phrases, from the introduction of irrelevant inquiries, and from the frequent demand of evidence which could not possibly be afforded, and which, in corresponding instances, is not required, continual sources of confusion and perplexity have been opened.

First preliminary.

1. We may begin by premising, that on the subject of Church polity, we cannot reasonably look in Holy Scripture for any regular discussion, or explicit statements. What has often been remarked with respect to doctrine, and to morals, is also true with respect to discipline and to government. As the New Testament contains no systematic treatise on Christian doctrine, nor any formal digest of Christian morals, but leaves the teacher or the disciple to construct his moral and theological system by a diligent comparison of text with text, and of precept with precept: so we see also in the case of discipline and of polity, a similar disregard of scholastic arrangement. The Apostles and Evangelists, not addressing themselves to the learned, but writing more immediately for the use of ordinary persons, all of whom were well acquainted with the existing constitution of the Church, rather make allusion to things with which the persons addressed were familiar, than afford explanation for the satisfaction of others. It is, therefore, not only necessary, but a proper

exercise of candour and fairness, to compare one with another the various scriptural passages connected with the subject ; to consult the authority of history and the analogies of language ; and to use the various aids to interpretation which, in common cases, are thought desirable, nay, indispensable. And the conclusion would be unwarranted, that because Church polity is not fully and systematically treated of, the question, therefore, must be unimportant, or must remain obscure in spite of all examination.

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There is, in this respect, a striking contrast between the Jewish and the Christian revelation. The law of Moses, being written in the wilderness before the Israelites had effected the conquest of the promised land, and before their system of Church polity could be fully brought into operation ; is minutely accurate in prescribing the regulations, ceremonial and civil, which were to be afterwards established. Without some such distinct previous delineation in a regular code, it would have been impossible for the intended scheme of ecclesiastical polity among the Jews to have been put in practice. The Christian dispensation on the contrary was already complete ; the great sacrifice for sin offered ; the Holy Ghost sent ; the Church constituted ; and its ministers in their various grades appointed and ordained, before the Gospels and Epistles were composed. It seems, therefore, idle to expect in those writings any formally digested rules for Church government. Allusion, indeed, is often

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made by those writers to ordinances already existing, and to circumstances which required the exercise of apostolical authority; and from these allusions, a system may be clearly gathered or inferred, although no system be didactically enlarged upon¹.

Second preliminary.

2.—Again, we must not imagine it an infringement of sound protestant Principles, to consult, on the question now before us, ecclesiastical as well as scriptural antiquity; to consult the records of the Church as well as the Bible itself. The maxim that “the Bible, and the Bible only, is the religion of Protestants,” has been sometimes supposed to signify that no appeal to the primitive Fathers on any point, whether of doctrine or of discipline, is allowable in a true Protestant; but that all points must be decided by Scripture, and by Scripture alone. How far this rigid and unbending applica-

¹ “When they farther dispute, that if any such thing” (as Episcopal government) “were needful, Christ would in Scripture have set down particular statutes and laws, appointing that Bishops should be made, and prescribing in what order, even as the law doth, for all kind of officers which were needful in the Jewish regiment; might not a man, that would bend his wit to maintain the fury of the Petrobrusian heretics, in pulling down oratories, use the self-same argument with as much countenance of reason? If it were needful that we should assemble ourselves in Churches, would that God, which taught the Jews so exactly the frame of their sumptuous temple, leave us no particular instructions in writing, no, not so much as which way to lay any one stone? Surely such kind of argumentation doth not so strengthen the sinews of their cause, as weaken the credit of their judgment which are led therewith.”—Hooker’s Eccles. Pol. B. vii. Sec. 13.

tion of Chillingworth's maxim would be approved by that pious author himself¹, and how far Protestants ought to support their interpretation of the word of God from the writings of the Fathers during the three first centuries, it is not our purpose here to inquire. The ablest, however, and most learned impugners of Romish errors, we may remark, have always endeavoured to show, that those errors are of comparatively recent origin; that the testimony of the early Fathers is favourable to Protestantism; and that the Protestant views of Scripture truth have the sanction of antiquity. But we are not now concerned to maintain the authority of the Fathers on points of doctrine, however easy might be the task. Without insisting on the importance of their

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¹ Chillingworth himself published a short treatise on Episcopacy, the main argument of which is drawn from universal tradition. He concludes somewhat singularly in a syllogistic form, as follows:

"Episcopacy is acknowledged to have been universally received in the Church *presently after* the Apostles' times."

Between the Apostles' times and this "*presently after*," there was not time enough for, nor possibility of, so great an alteration.

And, therefore, there was no such alteration as is pretended: and, therefore, Episcopacy being confessed to be so ancient and Catholic, must be granted also to be Apostolic. *Quod erat demonstrandum.*"

The writer of the present essay would have introduced Chillingworth's treatise in a note at the end of the volume, did he not conceive that his readers must have already seen the same quotation, if not in the original, at least in a recent and very able publication by Mr. Rose, on the Christian ministry. The brief argument, however, of Bishop Stillingfleet, will be found quoted in note (C) at the end of the volume.

DISS. I. opinion with respect to *doctrine*, we are only here
 CHAP. I. obliged to state, what cannot but be universally
 admitted, the value of their testimony with regard
 to *facts*. We only wish to ascertain from them
 whether, in the apostolic times, Bishops did or did
 not exist.

The advocate of Presbytery, who would determine all questions of Church polity by Scripture alone ; who would allow no voice whatever to antiquity ; and who depreciates, for that purpose, the character, both moral and intellectual, of the Christian Fathers : proceeds on very dangerous ground. Is it not on their testimony, that we receive the most important of all facts, the genuineness and authenticity of the sacred canons ? Do we not believe the fact, that the Gospels and Epistles were written by the inspired persons whose names they bear, because the Fathers, as credible and competent witnesses, have attested it ? Is it not to the weight of their evidence that, in our disputes with unbelievers, we constantly and uniformly appeal ? And the fact that Episcopacy was or was not the form of church government established by the Apostles, is a fact to which the Fathers are as competent witnesses as to any other whatsoever. It is, as Bishop Hoadley somewhere tersely expresses it, “ a fact plain and simple : perfectly within their knowledge : not dependent on lengthened investigations or subtilty of reasoning, but perfectly level to all capacities : a fact in which they might very easily have been contradicted, had

they represented it falsely ; and a fact in respect to which they could not, in the first ages, be biassed by self-interest." When, under such circumstances, the anti-Episcopalian advocate denies the Fathers to be good and sufficient witnesses, does he not invalidate and virtually call in question their testimony in every other instance ? Does he not, in his indiscreet and foolish zeal to extol the Scriptures, at the expense of antiquity, go far to demolish altogether that authority which he pretends to uphold ?

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3.—The other circumstance remaining to be premised is, that the same precision in the use of terms to denote the different offices in the Church, must not be looked for in the Holy Scriptures as may be found in the writings of later ages. When Christianity was originally promulgated, the offices, as well as rites and ceremonies belonging to the newly modelled religion, could not at once possess appropriate designations. For, as Hooker notices, "Things are ancients than the names whereby they are called¹." To supply a deficiency of this kind, either new terms must be invented to express the new ideas ; or a new appropriation must be made, of terms in previous use. The latter method was the easier and the more natural, and seemed to offer less violence to language: the latter method,

Third preliminary.

¹ And out of the ground the Lord God formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air, and brought them unto Adam, to see what he would call them : and whatever Adam called every living creature, that was the name thereof. Gen. ii. 19.

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therefore, was uniformly adopted. Words used before in a general acceptation, were set apart to be employed henceforward in a peculiar and restricted sense. One considerable disadvantage would attend this arrangement. The restricted sense of the word would not for some time be thoroughly established : and confusion might occasionally arise from the employment of a term in the old signification interchangeably with the new. Thus the word ἐκκλησία, which had previously meant *an assembly of any kind*, and which came to signify in Scripture language *an assembly of Christians religiously employed* ; is yet, without scruple, applied by St. Luke in its previous unrestricted sense, to a concourse of Heathens unlawfully and riotously met together¹. Again. the word βαπτισμός, or baptism, which denotes the initiatory rite of Christianity, meant originally nothing more than an ordinary *cleansing by water*, and is employed by St. Mark, in its old signification, to express the washing of common furniture and utensils².

In like manner the term ἐπίσκοπος, or Bishop, equivalent in the Greek language to *overseer* or *superintendent*, and now restricted to the highest order of Christian ministers, is employed, sometimes

¹ He dismissed the assembly (ἐκκλησίαν.) Acts. xix. 41.

² And when they (the Pharisees) come from market, except they wash (βαπτίζονται) they eat not. And many other things there be which they have received to hold : as the washing (βαπτισμὸς) of cups and pots, brazen vessels and of tables. Mark vii. 4.

to denote an overseer of the laity, and at other times an overseer of the clergy; sometimes a Bishop properly so called, and at other times the pastor of a congregation. Even the dignity of the apostleship is occasionally termed an Episcopal office¹. So also the word *πρεσβύτερος*, appropriated, in a modern sense, to the second order of Church officers, was formerly expressive, in general, of advanced *age*, or of high *dignity*. In the New Testament the word is applied sometimes to the Apostles; and sometimes to the persons whom the Apostles ordained, and over whom they exercised authority. St. John more especially terms himself presbyter or elder². And lastly, the title *διάκονος* or deacon, which is now peculiar to the third order of Church officers, meant originally a servant or minister; and is used by the sacred writers with so much latitude of signification, that even the apostolic office is expressed by the word diaconate (*διακονία*)³, and our blessed Lord himself is styled a Deacon⁴.

It is therefore evident, that the Scriptural meaning of these three terms, referring to the three elders in the Christian ministry, can only be ascertained by strict attention to the passage where these

¹ Acts i. 20. It is remarkably illustrative of our present statement, that in the 25th verse of this chapter, the same office should be termed at the same time a ministry (*διακονία*) and an apostleship (*ἀποστολή*.)

² 2 John i. 1. 3 John i. 1.

³ Acts i. 25.

⁴ Matt. xx. 28. Mark x. 45. Luke xxii. 27.

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terms occur, and to the general tenor of the writer's argument. We must not expect words and phrases to be used with the same precision on their first appropriation to ecclesiastical things and persons, as we find them in later ages ; when their peculiar and restricted meaning was established, and when familiarity with their new interpretation had dissolved ancient associations.

Arrange-
ment of the
arguments
in this
essay.

Having thus far cleared the way for a full discussion of this question, I shall proceed to state some arguments in favour of Episcopacy, both drawn from Scripture and from ecclesiastical antiquity. I shall afterwards examine the validity of popular objections alleged against Episcopacy by the advocates of other systems.

Foundation
of the
Church.

The Founder of the Christian Church is Jesus Christ the Son of God, and Saviour of the world. This Divine person ordained twelve Apostles, whom, previously to his ascension into heaven, he authorized to form in his name, a spiritual society, by virtue of a commission conveyed in the amplest and most authoritative terms. "As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you. And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost : whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them, and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained¹. All Power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in

Order of
Apostles.

¹ John xx. 21, 22.

the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I command you, and lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world ¹."

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Invested with these high powers, both for themselves and for their successors unto the end of the world ; and inspired with wisdom from above by the descent of the Holy Ghost : the Apostles proceeded to the formation of a religious community, which, under the protecting care of Heaven, should gradually extend itself throughout the earth, and should continue till the consummation of all things. This spiritual society at first consisted of a single company or congregation. The members all resided in the same city. They performed their sacred rites together. They even had their property in common ; and their whole affairs, both temporal and spiritual, were managed by their divinely constituted overseers.

In proportion to the increase of members in the Church, by the conversion and baptism of many thousands both in Jerusalem and in adjoining districts ; the charge of all ecclesiastical affairs became burdensome and oppressive for so small a number as the apostolic college. A new order, therefore, of Church officers was introduced under the name of *Deacons*, that is, of ministers or servants, to whom the care of the sick and the poor was entrusted ; with authority to supply the wants of

Order of
Deacons.

¹ Matt. xxviii. 18, 19, 20.

DISS. I. both, out of the common funds of the Church¹.
 CHAP. I. These Deacons were permitted also (at least in some
 instances) to baptize, to preach, and to assist at
 the administration of the Lord's supper.

Order of
 Priests or
 Presbyters.

General su-
 perintend-
 ence by the
 Apostles.

This arrangement seems to have continued for some time ; but afterwards, when the Apostles, by Divine command, beginning from Jerusalem, made converts throughout Judea, Samaria, and the various provinces of the Roman empire, (not only among the Jews in those countries, but also among the Gentiles,) another order of Church officers was appointed. This order was found necessary to govern and direct, in different towns and confined districts, certain small communities placed under their charge; to preside also in their religious meetings; to administer the sacraments ; and to superintend the conduct of the Deacons. On this superior rank of ministers was bestowed the name of Presbyters, Elders, Pastors, or sometimes even of Bishops, in the sense of overseers of the people.

At the same time that the Presbyters and Deacons took the charge of single congregations, the Apostles exercised over the whole Church a general control. They retained in their own hands the exclusive power of ordination : they gave directions to the inferior ministers for the administration of Divine service ; they instituted forms of worship ; they prescribed rules of discipline ; they silenced erroneous teachers ; they inflicted censures on

¹ Acts vi.

notorious offenders ; they expelled the contumacious from the society. As, however, congregations in various quarters of the earth continued to increase and multiply, the care of all the Churches became too great a labour for the small number of Apostles originally ordained ; which number had, from the first, been diminished by the apostacy and death of Judas, and afterwards by the martyrdom of James. Accordingly St. Matthias, St. Barnabas¹, and St. Paul were added by our Lord himself to the apostolic or episcopal college², and invested with the same powers as the original members.

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But even this addition was at last inadequate to the increasing exigencies of the Church : besides that the advancing years of the apostles, and their prospect of removal from the sphere of their earthly labours, made it necessary to provide for the spiritual wants of future generations. They, therefore, under the direction of the Holy Ghost, consecrated other persons, to be invested with powers somewhat similar to their own ; but who, deriving those powers not immediately from Divine, but from human election, would in some respect be inferior and subordinate.

Cessation of
immediate
apostolical
authority
and substi-
tution of
episcopal.

¹ "Which" (design to offer them sacrifice) "when the *Apostles*, Barnabas and Paul heard of, they rent their clothes." Acts xiv. 14.

² "The first Bishops in the Church of Christ were the blessed Apostles. For the office whereunto Matthias was chosen, the sacred history doth term *ἐπισκοπήν* an episcopal office, which being expressly spoken of *one*, agreeth not less unto *all*, than unto him."—Hooker's Ecc. Pol. Book vii. Sec. 4.

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Timothy
made
Bishop of
Ephesus.

Thus St. Paul, in the prospect that he might not be able, in his own person, to visit the Church of Ephesus for some time, and never perhaps again ; appointed Timothy to preside over it with apostolical or episcopal authority. In his first epistle to this beloved disciple, whom he calls "his own son in the Faith," he instructs the newly consecrated bishop "how to behave himself in the house of God," and expresses his apprehensions of being "constrained to tarry long" away from his Ephesian friends and converts. And in his second epistle, written in the last year of his life, he inculcates diligence on the Ephesian bishop, from the consideration that his own ministry was now about to close. "Preach the word," says the Apostle to his youthful representative and successor ; "be instant in season, out of season, reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all long suffering and doctrine : for I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand¹."

Powers
given to
Timothy.

Superin-
tendence.

, That the powers entrusted to Timothy were the same with those which have been assigned by all churches to bishops ever since, will be abundantly evident from the following instructions :—"I besought thee to abide still at Ephesus, when I went into Macedonia, that thou mightest charge some that they teach no other doctrine, neither give heed to fables and endless genealogies. Let the Presbyters that rule well be counted worthy of

¹ 2 Tim. iv. 2. 6.

double honour; especially they who labour in the word and doctrine. Against a Presbyter receive not an accusation but before two or three witnesses. Them that sin rebuke before all, that others also may fear. Lay hands suddenly on no man, neither be partaker of other men's sins. Keep thyself pure¹." In these words we see the power of granting ordination, together with the peculiar rights of jurisdiction and coercion to be exercised not only over the laity, but also over the two subordinate ranks of clergy, conveyed in the amplest form.

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Ordination.

Another example of a Church officer elevated to episcopal authority is Titus, whom St. Paul appointed over the Presbyters and Deacons of Crete, investing him with the same powers which he gave to Timothy over those of Ephesus. Titus is directed to "ordain Elders (Presbyters) in every city," after due inquiry into the character and qualifications of each candidate: he is instructed "to set in order things that were wanting," by providing rules of discipline, and formularies of public worship: he is required to "exhort and to convince the gainsayers;" to "stop the mouths of unruly and vain talkers and deceivers;" to "rebuke" the Cretans "sharply, that they might be sound in the faith:" he is empowered and enjoined to "rebuke with all authority;" to "admonish heretics," and if they continued contumacious "after a first and second admonition," to "reject" or excommunicate them.

Titus made
Bishop of
Crete.

¹ See 1 Tim. & 2 Tim. passim.

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These ap-
pointments
not occa-
sional but
permanent.

More extensive powers than these, or more unequivocally expressive of episcopal pre-eminence could not easily be devised.

It has sometimes been conjectured that Timothy and Titus may have held the government of the Ephesian and Cretan Churches, under the title and character of Evangelists. This office of Evangelist is imagined to have been superior in rank to that of Presbyter, though inferior to the Apostleship : and to have been intended only for occasional purposes and for temporary duration. The original notion of an Evangelist is that of a person bringing glad tidings, (*εὐαγγέλια*,) or to speak more strictly, the glad tidings of salvation through Jesus Christ. Sometimes the term is applied to a person miraculously inspired to write a gospel, (*evangelium*,) in which latter sense two of the Apostles, St. Matthew and St. John, were Evangelists ; as well as St. Mark, who, in the capacity of Deacon, accompanied Paul and Barnabas in their apostolic journey¹. St. Luke, the remaining Evangelist, seems to have held the same rank of Deacon. The other sense in which we find the word Evangelist employed is to designate a preacher among unbelievers ; or, as we should call him in modern diction, a missionary. Philip the Deacon is on this account termed an Evangelist².

These ancient missionaries, like missionaries of the modern Church, might be of various orders in

¹ Acts xiii. 5.

² Acts xxi. 8.

the ministry. Eusebius informs us, that “whoever planted the Gospel first in any country was entitled an Evangelist¹,” and another ancient but somewhat later authority, seems to intimate, that Evangelists generally held the station of Deacons. “Evangelists,” he says, “are Deacons, as was Philip².”

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When, therefore, St. Paul gives a charge to Timothy, “Do the work of an Evangelist³,” he could not mean that the Ephesian Bishop was to exercise his episcopal functions in the character of a missionary: more especially as the Apostle subjoins immediately afterwards, in the very same verse, “make full proof of thy ministry or deaconship,” (*διακονίαν*), from which expression we might as well infer that Timothy governed the Church of Ephesus, in the capacity of a Deacon; as we might infer from the previous title given him, that he exercised his authority in the character of an Evangelist.

What St. Paul meant by “the work of an Evangelist,” may be sufficiently gathered from a preceding verse already quoted from the same chapter: “Preach the word: be instant in season, out of season: reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long suffering and doctrine⁴.” These duties cannot surely

¹ *Prima apud eos fundamenta evangelii collocantes EVANGELISTARUM fungebantur officio.*—Euseb. Hist. eccl. lib. iii. c. 37.

² *Evangelistæ Diaconi sunt sicut fuit Philippus.*—Ambros. in Ephes. iv. 11.

³ 2 Tim. iv. 5.

⁴ See Bishop Taylor on Episcopacy, sec. xiv. p. 61. Potter

DISS. I. be pronounced incompatible with the episcopal
CHAP. I. office.

Timothy
and Titus,
why not al-
ways resi-
dent.

To prove that Timothy resided constantly at Ephesus, or Titus in Crete, is not necessary to our argument. Both of these distinguished individuals derived, without question, episcopal powers, immediately from the hands of an Apostle : and this fact is all that our case demands. If, therefore, it should be alleged that Timothy and Titus were not constantly resident, each in his own diocese, we are not, on this account, warranted in supposing that they discharged a merely transient or temporary function : or that their occasional departure from Ephesus, or from Crete, dissolved their ecclesiastical connexion with the Presbyters and Deacons over whom they were appointed. For, as the Apostles themselves could not but be generally absent from many churches over which they retained episcopal authority ; and which they continued to regulate by means of such visitations and correspondence as circumstances rendered needful : so also when they delegated that authority to Bishops, it would happen that those Bishops, though holding a permanent jurisdiction, might, from time to time, be indispensably called away to other districts, by the exigencies of the infant Church¹. The probability is, that Timothy and

on Church Government, c. iii. and note (D) at the end of the volume.

¹ It has been insinuated that the occasional absence of Timothy and Titus from Ephesus and Crete respectively, would be a *dan-*

Titus did in the end reside permanently, each in his own diocese. They are denominated Bishops of Crete and of Ephesus, respectively, by the unanimous voice of all Christian antiquity; by no less than twenty distinct authorities, which mention the one as holding the Episcopate of Ephesus; and by eighteen equally plain authorities, which allude to the other as enjoying the episcopate of Crete¹. So that we might almost as reasonably call in question the fact, that Epistles were ever written by St. Paul to either of these distinguished overseers of the Church, or deny that they ever were at Ephesus or Crete, as doubt the fact that they were actual Diocesans of those places.

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It was before observed, that the Apostles, when they appointed Presbyters, and bestowed on them the honourable privilege of ministering in the congregation, reserved to themselves exclusively the power of granting ordination. This is evident from the circumstance, that, on this subject, there is not a single precept in Holy Scripture addressed to Elders; nor any passage in which they are represented otherwise than as assistants merely to their

No scriptural warrant for ordination by Presbyters only.

gerous precedent for episcopal non-residence. But the difference must be obvious between the case of an infant church and of an ancient establishment: between the absence of a primitive bishop, called from his own peculiar see to other places of laborious exertion; and the absence of a modern prelate from his only sphere of diocesan labour.

¹ See for the list of these authorities Taylor on Episcopacy, sects. xiv. & xv.

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Bishop or their Apostle, in the performance of this solemnity. We find their other duties in other parts of the New Testament, clearly and fully pointed out, but not one direction, not one injunction with respect to their laying on of hands. All regulations on this point are addressed to persons of a higher order. This total silence of the word of God, on the subject of non-Episcopal ordination, is calculated to leave the deepest impression and conviction on every candid mind.

Alleged exception to this rule.

As an exception to this rule respecting ordination, the only case which can with any plausibility be urged, is that of Timothy, alluded to by St. Paul in the following injunction :—"Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the Presbytery¹." From this passage it has been contended, that, at the time of Timothy's admission to the priesthood, the right of conferring orders belonged to certain colleges of Presbyters, by whom it was regularly exercised : but there are several decisive reasons why this allusion of St. Paul will not bear out the hypothesis in behalf of which this text is adduced.

First argument against this exception.

1. For first of all the learned Calvin affirms, that the word Presbytery does not, in this passage, refer to any college or assembly of Presbyters as conferring the gift on Timothy; but to the gift itself, namely, the function of a Presbyter, which Timothy

¹ 1 Tim. iv. 14.

received. According to that able interpreter the passage should be thus translated: "*Neglect not the gift (or honour) which by prophecy, with the laying on of hands, was conferred upon thee, of priesthood:*" and he alleges that this is the only interpretation compatible with the Apostle's language elsewhere on the same subject ¹.

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2. Again, supposing that, contrary to the opinion of Calvin, the word translated Presbytery, should mean a College of Presbyters; a question immediately arises as to the rank of those Presbyters in the Church: for, as we have already noticed, and as the adversaries of Episcopacy are continually reminding us, the highest officers of the Church are often spoken of under the denomination of Presbyters; oftener, perhaps, than those of lower degrees². It would consequently be unwarrantable to conclude, because a company of Apostles, in other words an assembly of the highest Church officers, acting in solemn synod, laid their hands on Timothy; that therefore a company of inferior officers, in other words an assembly of Presbyters, properly so called, might have done the same, and might, unsanctioned by the presence and co-operation of their Diocesan, have conferred the same orders.

Another argument.

¹ 2 Tim. 1. 6.

² "I betook myself," says St. Ignatius, "to the Apostles, as to the Presbytery of the Church."—Ignat. Epist. ad. Philadelph. Coteler. ed. sect. v.—See also the Apostolic Constitutions, lib. ii. cap. 28.

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A third argument.

3. Further, granting all that the anti-Episcopalian advocate can contend for ; granting him that the word translated Presbytery meant a college of Presbyters ; and granting that those Presbyters were merely Elders or Pastors of congregations ; what would these concessions amount to ? No more than this, that Presbyters, *in subordination to an Apostle*, possess the power of conferring orders : for to this effect we find St. Paul elsewhere declaring, that he himself was the person by whom Timothy was ordained. “ Stir up,” says he, “ the gift of God which is in thee, by the putting on of *my hands*.” In conformity with this high example, ordination by a Bishop, and his assistant Presbyters, is the very form appointed in the Church of England.

St. James
made
Bishop of
Jerusalem.

Among the examples from Holy Scripture of a church officer fixed by Apostolical appointment in a local Episcopate, none is more important than that of St. James, the brother of our Lord. This Apostle seems to have enjoyed a pre-eminence, and to have exercised an authority in the parent Church at Jerusalem, not otherwise to be accounted for than by admitting, in conformity to the suffrages of all antiquity, that he was constituted Bishop of that city. Proofs are frequent, both in the Book of Acts and in the Apostolical Epistles, of the peculiar influence possessed by St. James at Jerusalem ; as well as of his constant residence in that metropolitan see. Thus the first direction given by St. Peter, when delivered out of prison, was “ Go

shew these things unto James, and to the brethren¹." Again St. Paul declares to the Galatians, that on his first arrival at Jerusalem, after his conversion, he saw, besides Peter, "none other of the Apostles save James the Lord's brother²." At a later period, when the same Apostle returned to the holy city, he mentions "James, Peter, (Cephas)," and "John," as the acknowledged "pillars of the Church," assigning the priority to James³. St. Luke, also, recording the journey in which he accompanied St. Paul to Jerusalem, gives this account:—"The brethren received us gladly, and the day following Paul went in with us unto James, and all the Elders were present⁴." On this passage St. Chrysostom observes, that St. James determined nothing by his sole authority as a Bishop (οὐχ ὡς ἐπίσκοπος αὐθεντικῶς διαλέγεται) with regard to the important question then in debate; but, in conjunction with his assistant Presbyters, took Paul into council with him. The learned Father adds, that the Presbyters conducted themselves, on this occasion, with all due reverence (μετ' ὑποστολῆς) towards their ecclesiastical superior⁵.

It is further very remarkable respecting the local Episcopate of St. James, that in the celebrated assembly, entitled the first general council held by the whole Apostolic college, together with the Elders and Brethren of the Church in Jerusalem,

¹ Acts xii. 17.² Gal. i. 19.³ Gal. ii. 9.⁴ Acts xxi. 18.⁵ Chrys. Comm. in Act. xxi.

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CHAP. I. St. James, the resident local Bishop, presided in the conclave. We read that there was much earnest discussion : that St. Peter first addressed the assembly : that Paul and Barnabas next expressed their opinion, contending for the exemption of the Gentiles from the Mosaic law : and that finally, St. James, as president, summed up the arguments and the evidences advanced on all sides, and delivered his sentiments in authoritative terms as follows:—"My sentence is, that we trouble not them, who from among the Gentiles are turned to God ¹." In this sentence the *whole* council unanimously concurred : and yet it is remarkable that the other members, even those of Apostolic dignity, are passed over in silence ; and that when messengers were sent to notify this decree among the Churches, they are reported by St. Paul as having "come from James ²." On this peculiar expression of the Apostle, St. Augustin has observed that the "coming" of the messengers "from James" denoted their being sent by the Church of Jerusalem, over which James presided.

Another conclusion has been very appositely drawn from Scripture, that because St. James addresses his canonical epistle "to the twelve tribes scattered abroad ³;" he must have conceived those Hebrew Christians, who came up annually from various quarters and worshipped at Jerusalem, to be under his peculiar charge as Bishop in the

¹ Acts xv. 19.

² Gal. ii. 12.

³ James i. 1.

city and neighbourhood to which they annually resorted.

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The fact, however, that St. James was Bishop of Jerusalem, must be admitted by every person at all conversant with scriptural or ecclesiastical authorities. It is a fact to which, as Heylyn remarks, "there is almost no ancient writer but bears witness¹." Ignatius, a contemporary of St. James, mentions the proto-martyr Stephen as Deacon under the latter Bishop². Hegesippus, the earliest of uninspired ecclesiastical historians³; Clement of Alexandria⁴, Eusebius of Cæsarea⁵, Theophylact⁶, Epiphanius⁷, Ocumenius⁸, Ambrose Bishop of Milan⁹, St. Jerome¹⁰, St. Chrysostom¹¹, St. Augustine¹², (to whom we may subjoin the assembled Fathers, to the number of two hundred and eighty-nine, in the sixth general council (A.D. 680) held at Constantinople;) all unite in affirming James, the brother of our Lord, to have been Bishop of Jerusalem. St. Cyril himself, Bishop of that city (A.D. 351,) speaks of James as the first of his

¹ Peter Heylyn's Reformation Justified, part i. c. 2. p. 199.

² Ignat. Epist. ad Trall.

³ Heges. in Hierón. vid. etiam apud Euseb. Hist. lib. iv. cap. 21.

⁴ Apud Euseb. lib. ii. cap. 1.

⁵ Euseb. lib. vii. cap. 14.

⁶ Comment. in Gal. ii.

⁷ Advers. Hæres. xxix. n. 2.

⁸ Comm. in Gal. ii.

⁹ In Gal. i.

¹⁰ De Scriptor. eccles.

¹¹ Hom. ult. in Joann.

¹² Advers. Cresconium, lib. ii.

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predecessors¹: Epiphanius not only describes him as the earliest of Bishops, but as occupant of “the Lord’s own throne by the Lord’s own appointment²:” and lastly, Eusebius even particularizes the chair or seat (*cathedra episcopalis*) on which St. James sat as Bishop, to have been carefully preserved as an interesting memorial, and readily shown to all visitors (τοις πασι).

Whether
James
Bishop of
Jerusalem
was one of
the twelve.

Whether the person whom we have now proved to have filled the Episcopal chair in Jerusalem, and who was certainly our Lord’s kinsman, was or was not one of the twelve Apostles, is a fact much disputed. But this fact is not essentially connected with our argument. For, in either case, we have a Church officer placed over Presbyters, and fixed in a local Episcopate. If, however, St. James was not one of the twelve Apostles originally chosen by Christ himself, the circumstance would be still more decisively in our favour. The elevation of a disciple of inferior rank to a station so dignified, that he pronounced sentence as the local, and, therefore, presiding Bishop, in an assembly of Apostles; would not only be remarkable, but would show the weight and importance attached to Episcopacy, locally, fixedly, and regularly established.

There were two of this name in the number of the “twelve.” James, the son of Zebedee, and

¹ Catech. iv. cap. de cibis, & catech. xiv.

² Epiph. advers. Hæres. 78, n. 7.

James, the son of Alpheus. The son of Zebedee was martyred soon after our Lord's ascension¹, and could not, therefore, have been the Bishop of Jerusalem. If the son of Alpheus held that office, we must suppose Alpheus to be another name for Cleophas. Cleophas was, we know, the father of that James, who, under the appellation of "the Lord's brother," held the Episcopate of Jerusalem. But, that Cleophas and Alpheus were the same person, there are several good reasons for disputing, drawn both from Scripture and from ancient uninspired writers².

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Passing over other less important proofs from Scripture in favour of Episcopacy, we shall terminate this part of our discussion, with an argument arising from the book of Revelations ; where we find

¹ Acts xii. 2. "And he (Herod) killed James the brother of John with the sword."

² See note (E) at the end of the volume, for Bishop Taylor's enumeration of them. We may add to their testimony the concessions of the more modern authorities, Salmasius and Calvin, held in the greatest reverence by our opponents. Salmasius, speaking of James, says : "Certum est, non fuisse unum ex duodecim." *It is certain that James was not one of the twelve*, v. Wal. Messalin, p. 20. Calvin's words are "Non nego alium (alium scilicet, non Apostolum) fuisse ecclesiæ Hierosolymitanæ præfectum et quidam ex discipulorum collegio. Nam Apostolos non oportuit certo loco alligari." *I do not deny that some person, and that person not an Apostle, but merely one of the Disciples, presided over the Church at Jerusalem ; for no Apostle could be fixed to one definite place.*—Vide Prof. ad comm. in Jacobi Epist.

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The seven
apocalyptic
angels were
bishops.

our blessed Saviour sending messages or epistles by the Apostle John, to the Angels of the Seven Churches of Asia¹. Who these Angels were, is a point for careful consideration. That they were, in our popular sense, Angels, that is heavenly spirits, is too absurd to be maintained. A second supposition might be, which is equally unreasonable, that the Angels of the Churches were the Churches themselves : for, in the explanation of St. John's vision, at the conclusion of his first chapter, the candlesticks, which represent the seven Churches, are clearly distinguished from the seven stars, which are emblems of the angels. Nor, thirdly, would it be a satisfactory hypothesis to explain the term in question, as meaning a collective body or Presbytery. These Angels are always addressed as individuals and not as colleges. For each of them is always addressed in the singular number. There is no example, under similar circumstances, throughout the sacred volume, of the same mode of expression being used towards a collective body².

¹ Rev. i. 20.

² A respectable and learned anti-Episcopalian authority, Professor Campbell, considers the supposition (we are here opposing) untenable, and rejects it for the reasons we have stated. "With this interpretation," says he, "I am dissatisfied. Though we have instances, especially in precepts and denunciations, wherein a community is addressed by the singular *thou* and *thee*, I do not recollect such an use of an appellative as the application of the word *angel* here would be on the hypotheses of these interpreters."—Lectures on Ecc. Hist. vol. i. p. 159. For further information on this point, see note (F) at the end of the volume.

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After ascertaining that the Angels in the Apocalypse were individual persons, our next inquiry is with respect to their rank and jurisdiction in the Church. That they were important persons, and occupied a high official station, appears from our Lord's selection of them, before all others, to receive and communicate his divine messages. Indeed, the word angel is frequently used in the sacred writings as an appellation necessarily implying distinction and authority. Among the Jews the High Priest was often termed angel, from the idea that he was God's messenger¹: as also were the Rulers of the synagogue, who were often termed angels of the congregation. And the Angel of the congregation had under him inferior ministers, corresponding to the Presbyters and Deacons of the Christian Church². In the prophecies of Malachi, our Lord himself is termed the Angel of the covenant³. And as the titles Angel and Apostle are very nearly synonymous⁴, we find the Apostles actually called Angels in the very book now before us⁵.

¹ Vide Diodor. Sicul. apud Photium Bibliothec. cod. 244.

² See Dr. Russell's sermon on Episcopacy, with whose views of the subject the author very much coincides, and who, on all questions connected with Jewish antiquity, must be acknowledged of the highest authority.

³ Mal. iii. 1.

⁴ Potter with very curious accuracy remarks this nice grammatical distinction, that an *Apostle* means a person empowered to deliver a message, and an *Angel* a person who actually delivers it. On Church government, p. 149. So small a difference is equivalent to identity.

⁵ Rev. xxi. 12. 14.

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The high prerogatives belonging to these Apocalyptic Angels, or as we should term them, Bishops, of the seven Churches, are remarkably apparent from the language of our Saviour himself, addressed to them in his divine epistles. He makes them responsible for their respective Churches. He ascribes to them the powers of jurisdiction and coercion. He blames some of them, for not exerting these powers with sufficient vigour : he bestows praise on others for their energy and faithfulness. And it was not merely over the laity that this spiritual jurisdiction was exercised ; for Presbyters and Deacons undoubtedly existed at that time in the Asiatic Churches. We read of St. Paul, many years before, sending from Miletus to Ephesus, “ to call the Presbyters of the Church ¹.” To complete this argument, it may be noticed that the very names, in some cases, of these Asiatic Bishops, are still preserved in ancient Church writers ¹. We are, therefore, warranted to affirm, (agreeably to the concurring testimony of all ecclesiastical antiquity,) that the Angels of the seven Churches of Asia were Bishops, appointed by the Apostles, and recognised by our blessed Lord himself, as

¹ Acts xx. 17.

² For several of their names see Potter on Church Government, chap. iv. p. 151. Tertullian mentions an example ; “ Sicut Smyrnæorum ecclesiæ Polycarpum ab Joanne conlocatum refert.” *As the Church of Smyrna relates that Polycarp was installed by St. John*, c. xxxii.—In Thorndike on Religious Assemblies, p. 81.—See also Blondel. Apol. pro sent. Hieron. præf. p. 6.

presiding over Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamos, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, and Laodicea.

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We have now traced the progress of the Christian Society, from infancy to full maturity ; from the period when Christians first assembled regularly for divine worship, to the time when our Saviour addressed messages of consolation or of rebuke through his beloved disciple, the writer of the Revelations, to the Bishops of the Seven Churches of Asia. We have plainly seen the gradual distribution of sacred functions among three distinct orders of Church officers ; and we have more especially ascertained the right of conferring ordination to have been vested exclusively in the highest of these orders, and never in any instance to have been imparted to, nor exercised by the inferior Clergy.

CHAPTER II.

ARGUMENT FROM ANTIQUITY.

DISS. I. CHAP. II. **THE** reader has already been prepared to find the preceding arguments from Scripture supported by the authority of antiquity ; and, therefore, without repeating what has been already stated, we shall at once bring forward ancient testimonies to the fact, that Episcopacy was the original and apostolical constitution of the Church.

Testimony
of the Apostolic
Fathers.

As witnesses in every cause are valuable proportionably to their means of information, we shall begin with those venerable writers, who have received the name of Apostolic Fathers, because they not only lived in the days of the Apostles, and enjoyed the benefit of their instructions and conversation ; but also were by them ordained to the ministry. Living at that early period, and eminently distinguished for zeal and piety in the purest and most pious age, these holy men can neither be suspected of falsehood, nor of ignorance ; neither of deceiving others, nor of being themselves deceived.

Clement of
Rome.

The first of these authors to be quoted is St. Clement, of whom we read in Scripture, that he

was a "fellow labourer" with the Apostle Paul, and that his "name was written in the book of life¹." This excellent person was afterwards appointed to the Bishoprick of Rome, and wrote an Epistle in the name of that Church, to the Church at Corinth, with the benevolent view of quieting some dissensions among the Corinthian converts, with respect to their spiritual guides.

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Near the opening of his epistle, Clement eulogises the Corinthians for their previous obedience to ecclesiastical authority, before these jealousies and seclusions had arisen among them. "Ye walked," he says "according to the law of God, being subject to your supreme rulers, and yielding due honour to the Presbyters²." He afterwards subjoins an exhortation: "Let us venerate our supreme rulers, and let us reverence our Presbyters³. The term *ἡγουμένοι* which we have here translated supreme ruler; in Latin, *præpositus*, was, in later times, among the ordinary designations of a Bishop; just as in our own times we hear every day the words Prelate, Bishop, and Diocesan, used interchangeably in our own language⁴.

¹ Phil. iv. 3.

² ὑποτασσόμενοι τοῖς ἡγουμένοις ὑμῶν, καὶ τιμὴν τὴν καθήκουσαν ἀπονέμοντες τοῖς παρ' ὑμῖν πρεσβυτέροις. Epist. Clem. ad Corinth.

³ προηγουμένους ὑμῶν αἰδεσθῶμεν, τοὺς πρεσβυτέρους ὑμῶν τιμήσωμεν. Ibid.

⁴ Cyprian applies the word *præpositus* (in Greek *ἡγούμενος*.) even to the Apostles. "The Lord himself," he says, "chose the Apostles, that is the Bishops and Rulers of the Church." Quoniam

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This pious Father declares farther in the same epistle, that the constitution of the Church, and the succession of Church officers, were determined and arranged under the express sanction of the Divine Founder himself. “The Apostles” he says, “knowing of the Lord Jesus, that contests would arise concerning the Episcopal name (or order) and for this cause, having a perfect fore-knowledge” (of these things) “ordained those ministers before mentioned; and, moreover, established a rule of succession, that when they should die, other approved persons should succeed to their ministry¹.” The same apostolic writer elsewhere traces a correspondence between the Christian and the Jewish polity. He observes, that “the High Priest had his proper services to perform: that the Priests had their proper place appointed: that to the Levites appertained their proper ministries: and that the layman was confined to the proper bounds of what was prescribed to laymen².” The exhortation

Apostolos, id est episcopus et præpositos, Dominus elegit. Cyp. lib. iii. ep. 9.

¹ καὶ οἱ ἀπόστολοι ἡμῶν ἔγνωσαν διὰ τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ ὅτι ἔρις ἔσται ἐπὶ τοῦ ὀνόματος τῆς ἐπισκοπῆς· διὰ ταύτην οὖν τὴν αἰτίαν πρόγνωσιν εἰληφότες τελείαν, κατέστησαν τοὺς προειρημένους, καὶ μεταξὺ ἐπινομήν δεδώκασιν ὅπως ἐὰν κοιμηθῶσιν, διαδέξωνται ἕτεροι δεδοκιμασμένοι ἄνδρες τὴν λειτουργίαν αὐτῶν.— S. Clement. Epist. ad Corinth. cap. 44, ad init.

² Τῷ γὰρ ἀρχιερεὶ ἴδιαι λειτουργίαι δεδομέναι εἰσὶ, καὶ τοῖς ἱερεῦσιν ἴδιος ὁ τόπος προστέτακται, καὶ λενίταις ἴδιαι διακονίαι ἐπικείνται· ὁ λαϊκὸς ἄνθρωπος τοῖς λαϊκοῖς προστάγμασιν δέδεται.— Cotel. Ed. cap. 40.

which St. Clement grounds on this analogy, is expressed immediately afterwards as follows : “ Let, therefore, every one of you, my brethren, bless God in his proper station, keeping a good conscience, in all honesty *not exceeding his appointed rule of service*¹.” He proceeds to dissuade from irregular and schismatical proceedings, by instancing the case of those offenders, who, under the Jewish dispensation, received the punishment of death. “ Consider, brethren,” he adds, “ that the greater our knowledge, the more fearful our responsibility².”

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The next in order of the Apostolic Fathers is Ignatius. IGNATIUS, Bishop of Antioch, in Syria. He was appointed to that see within thirty-six years of our Saviour’s crucifixion ; presided over the Church of Antioch during a period of forty years ; and at last suffered martyrdom in the cause of truth. He was torn in pieces at Rome by wild beasts, A. D. 110. “ He was personally intimate with the Apostles,” says St. Chrysostom ; “ was perfectly acquainted with their doctrine ; and had their hands laid upon him.” Eusebius states of him that he received consecration (διὰ τῆς τοῦ μεγάλου Πέτρου δεξιᾶς) immediately from St. Peter, whom he here styles “ the great.” No witness could be imagined less liable to exception than Ignatius, either in point of character, or of information : and happily, his evidence, with respect to the constitution of the

¹ Cotel. ed. cap. 41.

² Ibid.

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Church, is as clear and as explicit, as his authority is important and decisive. He wrote to various churches, after the example of the Apostles, letters much admired by antiquity ; which are quoted by various writers, and which tend peculiarly to interest the reader, from the affecting consideration that the writer of them was a prisoner, on his way to Rome, anticipating a cruel death. His feelings on this subject, combine the courage of a hero with the piety of a Christian : “ Nothing,” says he, “ shall move me, that I may attain to Jesus Christ ; let fire and the cross ; let hordes of wild beasts ; let breaking of bones, and tearing of members ; let the scattering in pieces of the whole body, and all the wicked torments of the Devil come upon me,—only let me enjoy Jesus Christ.”

To quote all the passages from this intrepid assertor of divine truth, which have reference to our present argument, is unnecessary, and might even be tedious. We shall confine ourselves to a few statements directly to our purpose out of various epistles. Writing to the Trallian Church, “ Let all men,” he says, “ reverence the Deacons as Jesus Christ, and the Bishop, as Him who is the Son of God ; the Presbyters as the sanhedrim of God, and college of the Apostles. Without these there is no Church ¹.” In the same epistle, having ex-

¹ Ὁμοίως πάντες ἐντρεπέσθωσαν τοὺς διακόνους, ὡς Ἰησοῦν Χριστόν· ὡς καὶ τὸν ἐπίσκοπον, ὅντα υἱὸν τοῦ πατρὸς· τοὺς δὲ πρεσβυτέρους, ὡς σύνδεσμον ἀποστόλων· χωρὶς τούτων ἐκκλησία οὐ καλεῖται.—Cotel. ed. cap. 3.

horted the Trallians to “continue inseparable from Jesus Christ,” he proceeds, “He that is within the altar is pure : but he who is without, (that is, who does any thing without the Bishop, and the Presbyters, and the Deacons,) is not pure in his conscience¹.” In his epistle to the Philadelphians, having saluted them in the blood of Jesus Christ, “which,” says he, “is an eternal and enduring joy, especially to all who are at unity with the Bishop and the Presbyters who are with him, and the Deacons ; whom, established by the determination of Jesus Christ, he has firmly settled, according to his own will, by his Holy Spirit².” To the Church at Smyrna, having exhorted the members of it to unity and concord, he thus describes the only method, in his opinion, of preventing schism. “See that ye follow, all of you, your Bishop, as Jesus Christ follows the Father. Follow your Presbytery as Apostles. Reverence, moreover, your Deacons, as you would the mandate of God. Let nothing be done without the Bishop, in matters pertaining to the Church. Let that eucharist be considered duly constituted, which is either offered by the Bishop, or by him whom the Bishop has

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¹ Ὁ ἐντὸς θυσιαστηρίου ὢν καθαρὸς ἐστίν, ὁ χωρὶς ἐπισκόπου καὶ πρεσβυτερίου καὶ διακόνου πράσων τι, οὗτος οὐ καθαρὸς ἐστίν τῇ συνειδήσει.—Cotel. ed. cap. 7.

² Μάλιστα ἐὰν ἐν ἐνὶ ὧσιν σὺν τῷ ἐπισκόπῳ, καὶ τοῖς σὺν αὐτῷ πρεσβυτέροις, καὶ διακόνοις, ἀποδεδειγμένοις ἐν γνώμῃ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, οὗς κατὰ τὸ ἴδιον θέλημα ἐστήριξεν ἐν βεβαιωσύνῃ, τῷ ἁγίῳ αὐτοῦ πνεύματι.—Cotel. ed. præf.

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authorized. Wherever the Bishop is, there let the people be : as, where Jesus Christ is, there is the Catholic Church. It is not lawful without the Bishop's license, either to baptize, or to celebrate the holy communion : but whatever he shall approve of, is also pleasing to God ; that thus, whatever is done may be done safely and correctly¹." One passage more may suffice from the writings of this illustrious martyr. In his Epistle to St. Polycarp, who, like himself, was an immediate Disciple of the Apostles, he thus exhorts the people through their spiritual head : " Do all things to the glory of God ; hearken unto your Bishop, that God may also hearken unto you : my soul be surety for them that submit to their Bishop, with their Presbyters and Deacons ; and let my portion be with them in God² !"

So very clear and decided are the passages now quoted, and so competent is the author, both in point of character and of knowledge, as a witness to the Apostolical institution of Episcopacy ; that those opponents who reject this institution have no resource but to impugn the authority of the writings ascribed to Ignatius. There is some

¹ Πάντες τῷ ἐπισκόπῳ ἀκολουθεῖτε, ὡς Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς τῷ πατρὶ· καὶ τῷ πρεσβυτερίῳ, ὡς τοῖς ἀποστόλοις· τοὺς δὲ διακόνους ἐντρέπεσθε, ὡς Θεοῦ ἐντολήν· κ. τ. λ.—Cotel. ed. cap. 8.

² Πάντα εἰς τιμὴν θεοῦ γινέσθω· Τῷ ἐπισκόπῳ προσέχετε, ἵνα καὶ ὁ Θεὸς ὑμῖν ἀντίψυχον ἐγὼ τῶν ὑποτασσομένων τῷ ἐπισκόπῳ, πρεσβυτέροις, διακόνις· καὶ μετ' αὐτῶν μοι τὸ μέρος γένοιτο σχεῖν ἐν θεῷ. Ibid. cap. 5. 6.

plausibility in the arguments by which this attack has been supported : and the controversy has called forth, on both sides, more learning and ability than almost any other disputed fact in ecclesiastical literature. At the same time we are fairly entitled to remark, that Bishop Pearson's powerful vindication of the well known Seven Ignatian Epistles, from some of which we have quoted, appears so far to have settled the question, that no theological disputant of any reputation has ventured to come forward with a regular and systematic reply. That we may, however, afford the general reader some acquaintance with a controversy intimately, (though not altogether essentially) connected with our subject, we shall suppose the anti-episcopalian objector to express his thoughts in something like the following manner :—“ You claim authority for an author, whose works, as your own divines acknowledge, are some of them interpolated, and others spurious. I, therefore, discredit the whole. To determine how far forgery has been carried, when once forgery has been proved, is impossible. I cannot enter into all your niceties of criticism ; nor fill my eyes with the dust of antiquity to ascertain which of these alleged writings are genuine, and which spurious. All must stand or fall together. Besides, Ignatius was too good a man to make so much parade of his fortitude, as is expressed in these Epistles. The eagerness for martyrdom with which you inflate him, implies forgetfulness of his Master's precept, ‘ when persecuted in one city, flee

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Objections
to the Ig-
natian
Epistles.

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to another.' To this moral ground of dislike I add critical objections. The style is unnatural, and unsuitable to his circumstances. A martyr on his way to the scene of torture would have written with simpler diction. He would not have used the grandiloquent and hyperbolical phraseology you ascribe to him. His compound epithets are interminable. Moreover, I deny the system of Church government for which you make him a voucher, to have existed in his time : Ignatius would have known that the constitution of the Church was not Episcopal but Presbyterian in his day. Again, your testimonies are unsatisfactory and insufficient : and even if you could prove the genuineness and authenticity of any portion of these writings to have been allowed by the Fathers, I attach but little value to that argument. The Fathers were plain, inartificial, simple men ; having neither sufficient caution to suspect, nor sufficient sagacity to discover imposition ¹."

The objections removed.

Such is an outline of the argument by which the

¹ A recent anti-episcopalian writer dates the Ignatian Epistles no older than the fourth or fifth century ; and makes a general appeal to "learned men" as his authorities for this opinion. But he is contradicted by Salmasius and Blondel, the two most learned of the writers on that side, who both unite in placing the Epistles in question two or three centuries earlier. Blondel dates them at the end of the second century ; and Salmasius at least fifty years before. *Epistolæ illæ natæ et suppositæ videntur, circa initium, aut medium seculi secundi, quo tempore primus singularis Episcopatus supra Presbyteratum introductus est. Vide Walo. Messalin. p. 253.*

assailant of the Ignatian Epistles would overthrow their authority. Let us now try the force of these objections. The introductory assertion that the writings of any author must stand or fall together, and that, when partial forgery has been proved, there is no necessity for laborious inquiry how far it has proceeded ; would be fatal to all history, as well as to all literature. Spurious compositions have been attributed to the most approved historians, theologians, philosophers, and poets, both in ancient and modern times. Sacred and profane writers have equally been liable to this objection. Among the latter every scholar is familiar with doubtful or confessedly forged writings ascribed to Hippocrates, Aristotle, Plato, Cicero, Tacitus, and Quintilian¹. In like manner spurious documents have been imputed to Apostles and Evangelists. St. Paul, in particular, warns the Thessalonians to this effect. "Be not soon shaken in mind" says he, "by letter as from us;" and concludes with alluding to the discrimination that was expedient in ascertaining the identity of his letters : "The salutation of me Paul with mine own hand, which is the token in every Epistle. So I write." These are his concluding words.

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CHAP. II.

¹ Among these it is curious to notice, that two-thirds of Hippocrates are disallowed by the learned : and that a work (*De Oratoribus*) ascribed by some to Tacitus, by others to Quintilian, gives sufficient reason, on the principle we are now condemning, for the rejection of all the works of both those admirable authors.

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CHAP. II.

This Apostle, therefore, was far from sanctioning the idea, that the writings ascribed to any author were to be accepted or rejected, without deliberate and judicious scrutiny¹.

The seven
shorter epis-
tles of Igna-
tius alone
genuine.

Respecting the works of Ignatius, the case is this. There are eight Epistles, three in Latin and five in Greek ascribed to him, which were unknown to the ancients, and are undoubtedly spurious. Of the remaining seven Epistles, two editions are extant; one comprising what are called the longer, the other, the shorter Epistles. The longer are so denominated from their containing interpolations and paraphrases of the shorter, evidently introduced in later times by some opponent of the Trinity, in support of the Arian heresy. The eight spurious Epistles, are, by the best critics, ascribed to the same hand as the interpolations; and were forged for the same heretical purpose². It is remarkable, in proof of this Arian tendency, that these interpolated writings have been received as the true Epistles by Arian writers of recent times (and by Whiston in particular), while the

¹ Among inspired writers to whom spurious Gospels have been attributed, we may enumerate St. Peter, St. Thomas, St. Matthias, St. Bartholomew, and St. Philip. There is a Gospel mentioned by St. Jerome, as having been attributed to the *twelve* Apostles. So also were the Apostolic canons and constitutions. In short the whole authority of Apostolic Scripture, would, if this most absurd mode of reasoning were admitted, be set aside.

² See Dupin Biblioth. des auteurs ecclesiastiques art. Ignatius, and Cotell's dissert. ad. fen. tom. ii.

shorter and more orthodox edition has been rejected by them as containing doctrines, which, in their judgment, could not, in the age of Ignatius, have prevailed in the Church.

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The inordinate display of courage, and the ambition of martyrdom expressed in the Epistles which we contend for, and alleged as incompatible with the moral character of Ignatius, are unimportant in this question. Granting the language to be as boastful as is pretended, it might, nevertheless, be very genuine. Such language, all historians are agreed, was in perfect accordance with the spirit of the times, when the crown of martyrdom was aspired to with an eagerness which modern apathy may well disbelieve¹.

¹ Vide Pearsoni Vind. Ignat. cap. 9.—As many persons, from the zeal with which they have been accustomed to hear the Ignatian Epistles reprobated, may imagine there is something in them morally shocking, it may be useful to state a few out of numerous authorities distinguished for learning, talents, and piety, who have received and admired these much calumniated writings. Not to mention estimable Roman Catholic divines, we may refer the most scrupulous inquirer to Vossius, Casaubon, and Le Clerc, among foreigners; and to our own Pearson, Usher, and Hammond: we are tempted to add a reference, with which some of our readers may be surprised, and others gratified, namely, John Owen, whom Dr. South, in his peculiar language, stigmatizes as the “great Coryphæus of rebellion:” John Owen was, however, respectable for his piety as well as erudition, and though a zealous anti-episcopalian, is thus quoted by Pearson. “In earum (scil. epistolarum) aliquibus *suavem et gratiosum*—ut nosstrates loquuntur, *fidei delectionis sanctitates, et zeli Dei spiritum spirantem et operantem agnoscit* (Owenus scil.)”—Vide Pearson’s Vind. Ignat. cap. 5.

DISS. I.

CHAP. II.

With respect to criticism on inflation of style, it is enough to say, that there is nothing very high-flown in these writings: and if there was, an oriental style would not be inconsistent with the thoughts and habits of an Asiatic author. The Bishop of Antioch might very naturally express himself in Antiochian Greek. It would even be surprising if he did otherwise. Instead of an objection, this is an internal proof of authenticity.

To affirm that the Church polity described in the Epistles of Ignatius could not have existence in his time, is to beg the question. It is to take for granted the very thing to be proved. Bishop Pearson shows, and we shall ourselves hereafter demonstrate in the progress of our present argument drawn from antiquity, that the language of other writers, both in that and the succeeding age, is conformable to the doctrines and principles of this martyr, as expressed in these writings. Even on the supposition, that the high Church sentiments ascribed to him were somewhat higher than those of many others among the Fathers; this would, in no respect, be contrary to the common course of things. Some Churchman in every age may very well be allowed to be a higher Churchman than his neighbours; more zealous on the subject of order and ecclesiastical discipline than the greater number of his brethren, who nevertheless entertain, upon the whole, the same sentiments with himself¹.

¹ Many phrases which have been objected to in Ignatius, refer to circumstances not likely now to be generally understood. Thus

Respecting paucity and insufficiency objected to in our testimonies, no assertion can be more misplaced. The authenticity of the Epistles we contend for is supported by a long chain of authorities, extending from the very period when they were written, down to the fifteenth century when they were first impugned. Nowhere is this chain broken, but every century produces separate witnesses, some of whom have transcribed whole passages: others have given catalogues, specifying the very seven Epistles which we now receive, and naming each by its appropriate title. These references are not confined to one language or country. They are introduced by writers of opposite persuasions, Catholic and Heretic throughout the three continents—in Greek, in Arabic, and in Latin. No records of the same period are supported by a greater weight of evidence. The most formidable and most learned of what we may be allowed to call the anti-Ignatian school, admit readily that the seven Epistles for which we are contending were received with implicit confidence by the ancient Church¹.

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CHAP. II.

his expression, "The Bishop sitting in the place of God," (*προσκαθήμενον τοῦ ἐπισκόπου εἰς τόπον Θεοῦ*) which has been impeached as an impiety, seems to mean only, that the place where the Bishop sat in the assembly of his clergy, was the same occupied by our Saviour, God the Son, at the celebration of the Lord's Supper. See further on this subject—Thorndike on Religious Assemblies, p. 73.

¹ The reluctant concessions of Daille and Blondel, together

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CHAP. II.

Nothing now remains for the objector but to call in question the competency of the Fathers to pronounce upon the authenticity of documents before them. It is not true however that they were easily imposed upon, or admitted writings of ecclesiastical importance without due examination. They did inquire and digest and scrutinize with the utmost care and accuracy. In fixing the canon of Scripture they were more particularly careful to sift the pretensions of different works claiming apostolical authority; and after diligent investigation, argued themselves into unanimity. And finally, in respect to uninspired monuments, (such as the Epistles now before us,) it is important to add, that no ancient writings have been ever questioned by modern inquirers, which were not either unknown to, or held in doubt by the Fathers. In this important particular the Epistles of Ignatius stand alone ¹.

Three reflections on the Ignatian controversy.

On a review of the whole preceding argument, there are three reflections which the reader may have in some degree anticipated. The first is, that the Ignatian Epistles, in being received by the Fathers, were received by persons who, from their situation and circumstances as ancients, were pe-

with the numerous testimonies from antiquity, will be found in Note (G) at the end of the volume.

¹ Vide Pearsoni Vind. Ignat. cap. iii. p. 29. Hammond has observed that Salmasius, who, with characteristic contempt for the Fathers, rejected the Ignatian Epistles, proceeded afterwards, not inconsistently, to reject a part of the sacred canon, supported by the same authority: namely, one of the Epistles of St. Peter.

cularly competent to try and decide the question respecting genuineness and authenticity. Secondly, that there is no foundation whatever on which to build the often repeated allegation, that these Epistles were forged for the purpose of assisting the Episcopalian cause; since that cause called for no such assistance. With the exception of one obscure individual, whom we shall hereafter notice, there was no disputer throughout the primitive ages, who opposed the established Episcopalian views of Church polity. The spurious letters and interpolations we have mentioned, were forged, as we have seen, in a later age, and for a different purpose; namely, to insinuate, on the authority of Ignatius, that the orthodox creed on the subject of the Trinity was un-apostolical¹, &c. Thirdly, it must be obvious that the ancient Fathers, by renewing these Epistles as authentic records of apostolic times, decided that the views of Church polity which they contain are conformable to apostolic usage.

Before we leave the subject of Ignatius, it will be right to notice, that a very ancient work, called

DISS. I.
CHAP. II.

Martyrdom
of Ignatius,
as related
by eye wit-
nesses.

¹ It is curious to trace, throughout the forged as well as the interpolated Epistles, the anxiety betrayed by the Arian interpolator in his overwrought imitation of the phraseology and turn of sentiment peculiar to Ignatius. Every Ignatian phrase is studiously and *usque ad nauseam* artificially reiterated; many opinions, those on Church polity in particular, are injudiciously, nay even absurdly exaggerated: while in the midst of this heightened picture the doctrine of the Trinity is obviously lowered.

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a "Relation of his Martyrdom," and purporting to be written by eye-witnesses, holds the same language with the martyr himself, in reference to the division of Church officers into three different ranks. On his arrival at Smyrna, in his way to Rome the scene of his sufferings, he is described hastening to visit Polycarp "Bishop of that city, formerly his fellow Disciple (for both of them had been Disciples of St. John)." Ignatius "being brought to him," continues the narrative, "communicating spiritual gifts, and glorying in his bonds, entreated the whole Church, and particularly Polycarp, to pray for him ; for the cities and churches of Asia were assembled in honour of this holy man, in the persons of their Bishops, Presbyters, and Deacons¹."

Polycarp.

We have spoken of ST. POLYCARP as the fellow Disciple of Ignatius, and Bishop of Smyrna. He wrote an Epistle to the Philippians, which commences in these words : "Polycarp, and the Presbyters which are with him, unto the Church of God which is at Philippi." This style corresponds with the usual introductory salutation addressed by St. Paul to the Churches ; and must be looked upon as an intimation from the writer, of his own

¹ Honorabant enim sanctum per episcopos, presbyteros, et diaconos, Asiæ civitates et ecclesiæ. Vide Cotelier. Patres, in Martyrio sancti Ignat. pp. 159. 166. 176.—There are three manuscripts of this work, one in Latin, and two in Greek ; they differ much in other respects, but all of them contain the passage we have quoted.

superiority in rank over the persons whom he mentions as being "with him." For, supposing him of equal rank with them, such a form of expression, to say the least, would savour of presumption. And accordingly we find, that in the succeeding historic records which refer to that period, the Presbyters are omitted ; and the succession of Church officers is deduced from Polycarp alone.

DISS. I.
CHAP. II.

This distinguished Father, in the Epistle to which we now allude, refers to the writings of his illustrious cotemporary Ignatius, in the following terms of high commendation. "We transmit to you, according to your desire, the Epistle of Ignatius, which he addressed to us, and such others also of his writing, as have come into our possession. They are subjoined to this Epistle, and by them ye may be greatly profited ; for they are expressive of faith, of patience, and of all things that pertain to edification in the Lord Jesus¹."

The only two of those Apostolic authors, to whose writings we have not yet adverted are Barnabas and HERMAS. The works of the former contain no allusion to the subject of Church Government ; we may, therefore, pass on to the latter. This writer is usually ranked among the Apostolic

¹ Epistolas sane Ignatii quæ transmissæ sunt nobis ab eo et alias quantascumque apud nos habuimus, transmisimus vobis, secundum quod mandastis ; quæ sunt subjectæ huic epistolæ : ex quibus magnus vobis erit profectus. Continent enim fidem, patientiam, et omnem ædificationem ad Dominum nostrum pertinentem. Vide Cotel. Patres. tom. ii. p. 191.

DISS. 1. Fathers, though his works are sometimes referred
 CHAP. II. to a somewhat later age ; namely, towards the
 middle of the second century, or about forty years
 after the death of the Apostle John. Without
 determining this question, we may observe, that in
 either case his testimony is valuable ; though cer-
 tainly still more so, if (as the best authorities, an-
 cient and modern, oblige us to suppose) he be
 really the Hermas honourably saluted in the con-
 cluding chapter of St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans.
 Hermas wrote a work in the form of an allegory,
 entitled the Pastor or Shepherd, which was much
 esteemed by antiquity, and was even read in
 some churches. In what he terms his third vision,
 he alludes to the constitution of the Church ; and
 poetically describes himself as beholding a splendid
 edifice, constructed by angels, and composed of
 square white stones, admirably cemented. In the
 interpretation of this sacred allegory, he takes
 occasion to enumerate the different orders in the
 Christian ministry. " These stones, square and
 white, exactly fitted at their joinings, these are
 the Apostles, and the Bishops, and the Doctors,
 and the Ministers : who by the mercy of God have
 come in, and have held the Episcopal office, and
 have taught, and have ministered to the elect of
 God ; in all meekness and holiness, both to those
 who have fallen asleep, and to those who still sur-
 vive ¹." Here are three distinct offices, discharged

¹ Lapides quidem illi quadrati et albi convenientes in commis-

by three distinct classes of Church officers : the Episcopal office, or *superintendency*, confined exclusively to the Apostle, or to the Bishop; that of *teaching*, performed by the Doctor or Presbyter; and that of *ministering*, allotted to the Minister or Deacon¹.

DISS. I.
CHAP. II.

The divine institution of Episcopacy might seem sufficiently established, by the testimony we have quoted out of those very early writers; who received the title of Apostolic Fathers, from the very circumstance of their consecration by the Apostles, and their perfect acquaintance with the original polity of the Church. But at the hazard of being tedious, we proceed to adduce later evidence from the works of their successors: and we shall begin with such authorities as flourished at the close of the first, or at the commencement of the second century.

Further
testimonies
since the
Apostolic
age.

Among these we may begin with Pius, Bishop of Rome, who suffered martyrdom about the year 150: and who, in his Epistle addressed to Justus of Vienna, gives the latter his proper title of Bishop, and enjoins submission to his authority upon the

suris suis ii sunt Apostoli, et Episcopi, et doctores, et ministri, qui ingressi sunt in clementiâ Dei; et Episcopatum gesserunt, et docuerunt, et ministraverunt, sanctè et modestè electis Dei qui dormierunt, quique adhuc sunt.—Vide Hermæ Pastor, cap. 5. Cotel. in loc.

¹ For proof that the term Doctor is equivalent to Presbyter, see Pearson's Vindication, c. 13. p. 171.

DISS. I. Presbyters and Deacons. *Presbyteri*, says he, *et*
 CHAP. II. *Diaconi, te observent*¹.

Hegesip-
pus.

Our next authority is HEGESIPPUS, the earliest uninspired historian of the Church. He wrote about 70 years after the death of the Apostle John, or A.D. 170, a work in five books, entitled, “A History of the Preaching of the Apostles.” The greater part of it has perished, though some fragments have been preserved by later writers. He is stated by St. Jerome² to have written “in a style plain and simple, like the characters which he described ;” and by Eusebius he is recorded to have been not a little instrumental, through his labours as an author, to the advancement of Christianity. Hegesippus mentions that he made it his business, in the course of a long journey, to visit the Bishops of the Church ; that he “conversed with a very great number ; that he found them all unanimous in their faith ; and that, in every line of Episcopal succession, and in every city, the same doctrine was received, which was taught by the law, by the prophets, and by our Lord himself³.”

¹ Pii epist. 2 ad Just. Vien. quoted by Bingham, in his *Origines Ecclesiasticæ*, Book 2. chap. 1. p. 53.

² De Scrip. Eccles. Hegesip.

³ *Δηλοῖ, ὡς πλείστοις ἐπισκόποις συμμίξειεν, ἀποδημίαν στελάμενος μέχρι Ῥώμης, καὶ ὡς τὴν αὐτὴν παρὰ πάντων παρεῖληφε διδασκαλίαν—*Ἐν ἑκάστῃ δὲ διαδοχῇ, καὶ ἑκάστῃ πόλει, οὕτως ἔχει, ὡς ὁ νόμος κηρύσσει, καὶ οἱ προφῆται, καὶ ὁ κύριος.—*Frag. Comm. Heges. apud Euseb. Eccles. Hist. lib. iv. cap. 21.*

This venerable writer further informs us that, after the martyrdom of James the Just, Simeon (who was also the son of Cleophas, the uncle of our Lord,) was unanimously appointed Bishop of Jerusalem; which long continued a virgin church, pure from any heresy, till one Thebulis, disappointed that he was not elected Bishop, devised some strange doctrine ¹.

DISS. I.

CHAP. II.

We may next adduce the evidence of IRENÆUS, Irenæus. an important witness in this cause, from the clearness of his testimony; from the undoubted authenticity of his works; and from the intimacy of his acquaintance with the distinguished Fathers of the preceding age. He was born in Greece, and derived his instruction in Christianity from Papias and Polycarp, (both of them disciples of St. John,) and is understood to have accompanied St. Polycarp to Rome about the year 157. Anicetas, the Roman Pontiff, prevailed upon him to visit France, and proceed to Marseilles, where numbers of his countrymen the Greeks were at that time settled. In his journey, arriving at Lyons, he was persuaded to settle there by Pothirus, Bishop of that city, under whom he performed the duties, for some time, of a Presbyter; and on whose martyrdom he succeeded to the Bishopric, a post of no small danger during that period of persecution. To this danger Irenæus, as he probably anticipated, afterwards fell a victim. He was put to the torture, under the

¹ Ibid.

DISS. I.

CHAP. II.

Emperor Severus, about the year 202, and afterwards beheaded. His diligence and ability have been generally admired and applauded, Tertullian in particular calls him *omnium doctrinarum curiosissimus explorator*; “a most diligent searcher into all points of doctrine.” We may express the opportunities of information which Irenæus enjoyed in his own language; “I have often seen Polycarp,” he says, “and I very well remember his person and behaviour when discoursing to the multitude; as well as his habits of familiar intercourse with St. John, and with the rest of the Apostles, who had seen our Lord.” This very competent witness distinctly speaks of Bishops as possessed of diocesan authority; and describes Presbyters as a separate order, exercising an inferior office, and invested with inferior powers. His evidence to this point is decisive. Even the adversaries of Episcopacy admit that about the middle of the second century an episcopal order, vested with peculiar powers of ordination and jurisdiction, existed and was fully established. It should however be observed that the testimony of this ancient Father goes still farther; not only proving that Bishops actually existed in his time, but that they unquestionably had existed from the beginning, and were successors to the Apostles. In a work against heretics, “We can reckon up,” he says, “those Bishops who have been constituted by the Apostles and their successors all along to our times. And if the Apostles knew hidden mysteries, they would have communi-

cated them especially to those in whose hands they placed even the care of the Churches, and whom they left for their own successors, delivering to them the same office of government which they had occupied themselves." In another place he says, "We have a list of the Bishops in succession to whom the Apostolic Church in every place was committed." And again, "All these," he says, (speaking of heretics) "are much later than the Bishops, to whom the Apostles delivered the Churches¹."

DISS. I.
CHAP. II.

Titus Flavius Clemens, commonly called CLEMENT of *Alexandria*, to whom we next refer, flourished towards the close of the second century. He was brought up in the school of Pantæus, an eminent Stoic philosopher, who had been converted to Christianity, and who had taught the principles of the Christian Faith to the Alexandrian Church ever since the episcopate of St. Mark, its founder. When his master Pantæus quitted Alexandria on a missionary enterprise to Ethiopia, Clement succeeded him in the catechetical chair, and taught numerous disciples with distinguished success.

Clemens
Alexandri-
nus.

¹ *Habemus numerare qui ab Apostolis instituti sunt episcopi in ecclesiis et successores eorum usque ad nos. Et si recondita mysteria scissent apostoli, vel his maximè traderent ea, quibus etiam ipsas ecclesias committebant; quos et successores relinquebant, suum ipsorum locum Magisterii tradentes—Habemus successiones episcoporum quibus Apostolicam, quæ in unoquoque loco est, ecclesiam tradiderunt—Omnes enim ii (Hæretici) valdè posteriores sunt, quam episcopi, quibus Apostoli tradiderunt ecclesias.* Irenæus advers. Hæres. lib. iii. cap. 3. lib. iv. cap. 63. lib. v. cap. 20.

DISS. I.

CHAP. II.

The work from which we are about to quote he entitled *Stromata*, from the variety of material which it contains. It must have been a kind of common-place book, composed of miscellaneous articles, to serve him in his old age, as he said, when his memory should fail him.

This ancient Father not only places the Bishop, the Presbyter, and the Deacon, each in a separate class; but describes the removal from one class to another as a promotion or advancement. So that a Presbyter on being made a Bishop was preferred in the same degree as a Deacon would be when made a Presbyter. To give a livelier impression of these gradations in the Church, he deduces them from corresponding preferments in the celestial hierarchy. “For here also in the Church,” says he, “the promotions of Bishops, of Presbyters, and of Deacons, are imitations, as I conceive, of the angelic glory¹.”

The distinction manifest in these words, is given still more plainly in those which follow. For having declared these preferments analogous to those which good men “walking in the footsteps of the

¹ Ἐπεὶ καὶ αἱ ἐνταῦθα κατὰ τὴν ἐκκλησίαν προκοπαὶ ἐπισκόπων, πρεσβυτέρων, διακόνων, μιμήματα οἶμαι τῆς ἀγγελικῆς δόξης.—*Strom. lib. vi. p. 667.*

The word *προκοπαὶ* or *gradations* clearly intimates that it was the same advancement for a Presbyter to be made a Bishop, as for a Deacon to be made a Presbyter. For to have described promotion or advancement from one order to the very same order would have been absurd.

Apostles, and conforming to the perfect rules of righteousness in the Gospel, look for in heaven ;” the venerable Father proceeds to give his notion, “ that those who, as the Apostle writes, were caught up into the clouds, should first be in the order of Deacons ; and then advance to the Presbyterate by an accession of glory—for glory differs from glory—until they increase unto the perfect man¹:” meaning by the “ perfect man” the Bishop, whom he conceives placed in the highest or most glorious station. We must here understand Clement to distinguish, in heaven, three orders or degrees of glory ; (*for glory, he says, differs from glory,*) and to consider the three orders of Bishops, Priests, and Deacons to be on earth an imitation of that celestial economy. The first or lowest he represents as occupying the place of Deacons ; the second or intermediate, the place of Presbyters ; and the highest or most perfect, the place of Bishops. The conjecture certainly of this pious man with respect to the heavenly regions need not be maintained ; but his testimony with respect to different orders in the Church on earth, of which he was eye witness, is unexceptionable².

In another passage of his works, he mentions

¹ Ἐν νεφέλαις τούτους ἀρθέντας γράφει ὁ Ἀπόστολος διακονήσιν μὲν τὰ πρῶτα, ἔπειτα ἐγκαταταγῆναι τῷ πρεσβυτερίῳ κατὰ προκοπὴν δόξης· δόξα γὰρ δόξης διαφέρει, ἀχρὶς ἂν εἰς τέλειον ἄνδρα ἀνέξωσιν.—Ibid.

² See Bishop Beveridge’s Codex Canonum Eccles. prim. illustratus, cap. xi. De Episcopis.

DISS. I.
CHAP. II.

James, the kinsman of our Lord, as being constituted by St. Peter, and the two sons of Zebedee, Bishop of Jerusalem; and observes that Peter, James, and John, who were held in highest estimation with our Redeemer, did not contend among themselves, after his ascension, for the highest place; but rather made choice of James the Just, to occupy the Episcopal chair in the holy city¹.

To make one further quotation from this author: he elsewhere informs us, that the Apostle John “when he settled at Ephesus, went about the neighbouring regions, ordaining Bishops; and setting apart such persons for the clergy, as were signified to him by the Holy Ghost².”

Tertullianus.

Quintus Septimius Florens Tertullianus, more familiarly styled TERTULLIAN, and generally supposed to be the most ancient of the Latin Fathers now extant, was born at Carthage, the metropolis of Africa, about the middle of the second century. His ability and learning called forth the deserved eulogy from St. Jerome—*vir erat acris et vehementis ingenii*—*Quid Tertulliano eruditius, quid acutius*³? He devoted all the powers of his mind to the defence of Christianity against Infidels; and presented to the governors of the Roman empire his most celebrated work, called “An Apology for the Christian Faith,” written about the year 200. He also for some time directed his talents to the support of the

¹ Clem. Alex. apud Euseb. lib. ii. cap. 1.

² Clem. Alex. Strom. lib. vi. p. 667. ³ Hieron. de Scriptor. c. 53.

Church against heretics ; but in the latter part of his life, he separated himself from the Catholic communion, and joined the followers of Montanus, to whose ascetic principles the austerity of his own habits had predisposed him. He attained to an advanced age, and died about A.D. 220, but the precise date of his death is unknown.

This learned and eloquent writer affirms distinctly the institution of the Episcopal order by the Apostles. "The order of Bishops," he says, "when traced up to its foundation, had certainly John (the Apostle) for one of its authors¹." He elsewhere gives this challenge to the heretics of his time : "Let them show us the origin of their Churches, let them unrol a catalogue of their Bishops, from the earliest to the latest ; by which their first Bishop may appear to have had for his founder and immediate predecessor, either some Apostle, or some Apostolic person, living in the time of the Apostles. For this is the established mode in which the Apostolic Churches count up their pedigree. The Church of Smyrna, for example, counts up to Polycarp, appointed by St. John ; the Church of Rome to Clement, ordained by St. Peter : so in like manner the other Churches produce their first Bishops apostolically constituted, that by them the Apostolic succession might be propagated and continued²." In his treatise on

¹ Ordo tamen episcoporum ad originem recensens, in Joannem stabit auctorem.—Tertull. adv. Marcion. lib. iv. cap. 5.

² *Edant ergo origines ecclesiarum suarum ; evolvant ordinem*

DISS. I.
CHAP. II.

baptism our author declares, "The right of baptizing belongs to the chief Priest, who is the Bishop; and after him to Presbyters and Deacons, yet not without the authority of the Bishop. Thus is the dignity of the Church preserved; on the preservation of which depends the preservation of peace ¹." "Reckon up," he says, in another work, "the Apostolic Churches, where the very chairs of the Apostles yet preside, each in its own place; at Corinth, at Philippi, at Ephesus, at Thessalonica ²."

Origen.

Among the writers of the third century, no one is more celebrated than ORIGEN, a native of Egypt, born about the year 185, of whom Vincentius Lirinensis, says, that "he was among the Greeks, what Tertullian was among the Latins, incomparably their best writer ³." He was carefully

episcoporum suorum ita per successiones ab initio decurrentem, ut primus ille episcopus aliquem ex Apostolis vel Apostolicis viris (qui tamenum Apostolis perseveraverit) habuerit auctorem, et antecessorem. Hoc enim modo ecclesiæ Apostolicæ census suos defecerunt. Sicut Smyrnæorum ecclesia Polycarpum ab Joanne conlocatum refert; sicut Romanorum Clementem a Petro ordinatum itidem; perinde utique et cæteræ exhibent, quos Apostolis in Episcopatum constitutos Apostolici seminis traduces habeant.—Tertull. De Præscrip. cap. 32.

¹ *Dandi (baptismum) quidem habet jus summus Sacerdos, qui est episcopus; dehinc Presbyteri et Diaconi, non tamen sine episcopi auctoritate; propter ecclesiæ honorem; quo salvo, salva pax est.*—Tertull. lib. de Baptis. cap. 17.

² *Percurre ecclesias Apostolicas apud quas ipsæ adhuc Cathedræ Apostolorum suis locis præsident; habes Corinthum, Philippos, Ephesum, Thessalonicenses, &c.*—Tertull. de Præscrip. c. 36.

³ *Sicut ille (Origines) apud Græcos, ita hic (Tertullianus) apud*

educated by his father, Leonides, in Christian principles; and when the latter was in prison, expecting to suffer death for his religion, the youth, at that time seventeen, wrote an affecting letter to his parent, exhorting him to steadfastness: "Take heed, my father, that you do not change your mind for our sakes." Leonides was beheaded, and his goods confiscated. In the state of poverty to which Origen was now reduced, he had recourse to the employment of teaching grammar, by which he supported his mother, his six brothers, and himself. He was afterwards appointed catechist or professor of theology, in the celebrated school of Alexandria, his native city. He became remarkable not only for his proficiency in sacred literature, but also for the number of his scholars, whom he so effectually instructed in the faith, that they submitted to the pains of martyrdom. His austere mode of life, his extraordinary eloquence and erudition, together with the number of his works, amounting, as is alleged, to six thousand volumes¹, procured him the greatest weight and influence in the Church: though his independence of mind, and some opinions of a novel and unscriptural character which he adopted, exposed him afterwards to obloquy and persecution. Being excommunicated by Demetrius, Bishop of Alexandria, he retired to Antioch, where, already

Latinos, nostrorum omnium facile princeps judicandus est.—Vincen. Lirinens. Commonit. cap. 24. p. 345.

¹ It is hardly necessary to remark that a volume in those days contained a small quantity of material, *rolled up*, as the name implies.

DISS. I. suffering exile as a heretic, he was racked and tor-
 CHAP. II. tured as a Christian, by the Roman Governor, who
 caused his feet to be stretched for several days in
 the stocks beyond their natural dimensions. He
 died at Tyre, aged 69.

This voluminous authority in no less than ten instances¹ mentions the distinction, in point of order and degree, between Bishops, Presbyters, and Deacons. Notwithstanding his heretical theories on other subjects, with which we have here no concern, the writings of Origen bear unquestionable testimony to the *fact* that Episcopacy was received by himself, and by all the Church as an apostolical institution. Not only does he distinguish three several ranks or orders, but also notices, like St. Clement, the degree of preferment from one order to another. "In the Church of Christ," says he, "there are some men who do not only follow feasts and them that make them; but also love the chiefest places, and labour much first to be made Deacons, not such as the Scripture describeth, but such as under pretence of long prayers devour widows' houses. And having thus been made Deacons, they very greedily aspire to the chairs of those who are called Presbyters; and some, not therewithal content, practise many ways to have the place or name of Bishops, which is as much to say as Rabbi²."

In his commentaries upon St. Luke, written when

¹ See Pearson, part i. chap. 11.

² Origen. Tract. xxiv. in Matt. cap. 23, quoted by Heylyn in his "Reformation Justified," part ii. chap. 4. p. 293.

he was a layman, he discourses upon second marriages, and observes that they exclude from all ecclesiastical dignities. "For one that is twice married can neither be a Bishop, a Presbyter, a Deacon, nor a Deaconess¹. In a homily on Ezekiel, speaking of the different penalties incurred by different ranks of offenders for the same offence, "Every one," he says, "shall be punished according to his rank; if the supreme Governor of the Church offends, he shall receive the greater punishment; a Layman will deserve lenity in comparison of a Deacon; a Deacon in comparison of a Presbyter²."

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The authority of Bishops over Presbyters is further apparent at this early period, from the following anecdote related by DIONYSIUS, Bishop of Alexandria, called the Great, who was a scholar of Origen; and who in those times of much difficulty, caused by controversies within the Church, and persecutions without, distinguished himself by learning, zeal, moderation, and prudence. An old man at Alexandria, Serapion by name, who from dread of torture or of death, had abjured Christianity,

Dionysius
of Alexan-
dria.

¹ Ab ecclesiasticis dignitatibus non solum fornicatio sed et nuptiæ repellunt: Neque enim episcopus, nec presbyter, nec diaconus, nec vidua, possunt esse digami.—Hom. 17. in Luc.—Origen alludes to the distinction between Bishops, Presbyters, and Deacons, no less than ten times, as remarked by Bishop Pearson, in whose *Vindiciæ* all the passages may be found.—Vide pars. i. cap. 11. p. 320.

² Pro modo graduum unusquisque torquebitur, &c.—Hom. v. in Ezek.

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repented on his death bed, and desired his grandson to call a Presbyter, that he might receive absolution, and the sacrament. The boy hastened with his message, but night had come on, and the Presbyter was disabled by sickness. In this emergency the poor man was likely to have died without the consolations of religion. "But," adds Dionysius, "I had previously given orders, that absolution should be granted to the dying if they desired it; and more especially, if they should humbly require it, in order to their departure from this life in hope and comfort." "The Presbyter," continues the narrative, "delivered to the youth a small portion of the Eucharist, giving him directions, that after dipping it into the water, he should introduce it into the mouth of the aged penitent. No sooner were these orders obeyed, than the old man breathed his last." From this anecdote, it appears that Dionysius, in his capacity of Bishop, had commanded the Presbyters to absolve dying penitents; a circumstance which clearly marks the supreme authority of the Episcopal order ¹.

St. Cyprian
of Carthage.

Thascius Cæcilius Cyprianus, known by the title of ST. CYPRIAN, was born at Carthage, of heathen parents, at the end of the second century. He was converted to Christianity about A.D. 246, and selected for his instruction in Christian doctrine the writings of Tertullian, to which he was so devotedly partial, that, as St. Jerome tells us, "scarcely a

¹ Dionys. Alex. apud Euseb.—Hist. Eccles. lib. 17. cap. vi.

day passed in which Cyprian did not say to his secretary, 'Give me my Master : ' meaning Tertullian." Soon after his conversion, this sincere Christian sold his estate, which was considerable, and distributed the proceeds among the poor. Such was the distinction which his piety and learning obtained him, that he was soon ordained a Deacon ; afterwards a Presbyter ; and finally, in the year 248, was elected Bishop of the Diocese. He so little coveted this elevation, that he concealed himself to avoid compliance with the wishes of the people ; and recommended that some older Presbyter should be chosen in his place. In little more than a year after his consecration to the Bishopric of Carthage, he was obliged to withdraw from that city ; on account of the persecution inflicted by the Emperor Decius, which was peculiarly severe upon the African Churches ; and during which the heathen populace (as we read in Pontius, his contemporary biographer, and one of his own Deacons) clamorously demanded in all the theatres, and public streets, that Cyprian should be thrown to the lions. During his exile, the Bishop continued to superintend the affairs of his diocese, by addressing to his flock such letters as their unhappy circumstances required. There was urgent need both for exhorting his people to constancy and patience under their pagan oppressors, and for exerting himself to resist the machinations of some rebellious Presbyters, who took advantage of his absence to encroach on his authority. Within two years he was

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enabled to return without molestation to Carthage, where new troubles awaited him; from the vehement discord that immediately arose upon the question how the *lapsers* (as they were termed, who had apostatized during the recent persecution,) should be absolved and re-admitted into the Church. Under a new persecution by the Emperor Valerian, A.D. 257, Cyprian was banished; then recalled; then obliged to conceal himself, lest he should be forced to suffer martyrdom in any other place than in sight of his own flock; and finally, he came publicly forward at Carthage as its metropolitan; refused to abjure the faith; made the short reply, "God be praised," to the sentence of decapitation read to him; and was led, amidst crowds of his followers and countrymen, to the place of execution, where he suffered with great constancy and firmness, after being ten years Bishop of Carthage, and twelve years a Christian.

The particulars which call most for our attention; in the history and writings of St. Cyprian, are the vigour with which on all occasions this excellent Father conducted the affairs of his diocese, and the powers which, as a Bishop, he continually claimed and exercised over the Carthaginian Presbyters and Deacons. His own Epistles, private and synodical, happily still extant in great numbers, as well as many letters of his most distinguished contemporaries in the most widely separated regions, (particularly of Cornelius, Bishop of Rome, and of Firmilian, Bishop of Neo-cæsaræa, in Cappadocia,)

are replete with testimony to the actual existence and apostolic institution of Episcopal power. Throughout all these numerous records, we read of the Bishop's dignity, honour, and priesthood (*dignitas, honor, sacerdotium*). Bishops are styled, peculiarly and exclusively, successors of the Apostles : Vicars of Christ, and Provosts or Presidents (*præpositi*) of the Churches : Fathers (*papæ*), Leaders (*duces*), Chief Priests (*pontifices*). We find the Roman clergy saying that they cannot determine a disputed question because the see was vacant, and they had not a Bishop who, with authority and counsel, (*auctoritate et consilio*) might take cognizance of the case. We see, in the times of persecution, Cyprian, during his exile, requiring an account from his Presbyters, with regard to the affairs of the diocese ; that he might give instructions from a distance the same as if himself were present. We read of his giving mandates, orders, statutes, (*mandatum, forma, lex*) ; we read of sacerdotal and Episcopal authority (*auctoritas episcoporum, auctoritas sacerdotalis*) ; of Episcopal superiority, government, providence (*providentia*). We observe Episcopal power (*potestas*) spoken of, and the vigour of Episcopal power ; the authority of the Episcopal chair (*vigor et auctoritas cathedræ*) ; the sublime and divine power of governing the Church (*ecclesiæ gubernandæ sublimis et divina potestas*). Whatever might be the number of Presbyters and Deacons in the Church of Carthage, the Carthaginian Bishop is styled in the way of eminence, "*the Pastor.*"

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We are told of Bishops exercising discipline (*disciplina*) : giving injunctions (*monita*) : being masters of their own acts (*acta*) or administration. Bishops are described to have a right of putting a negative (*intercedere*) on all proceedings among the inferior clergy, and thereby of making void whatever might be resolved upon without Episcopal sanction. Disobedience on the part of Presbyters to their Bishop is called schism, rebellion, sacrilege : contumacious Presbyters are stigmatized as rebels and schismatics, and their crime is compared in delinquency to that of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram. A Bishop is styled a Judge, and is said to exercise over his Presbyters, his judicial and censorial prerogatives, with lenity or with severity. And lastly, we read of Bishops having a primacy (*primatus*), an absolute, arbitrary, sovereign jurisdiction (*licentia et arbitrium liberum*), for which they are accountable to none, but to our Lord Jesus Christ, “ who singly and solely,” says St. Cyprian, “ has the power of preferring Bishops to the government of his Church, and of calling them to account for their administration of it.” *Quando habeat omnis episcopus pro licentiâ libertatis et potestatis suæ, arbitrium proprium, tamque judicari ab alio non possit, quam nec ipse judicari potest, sed expectemus universi judicium Domini nostri Jesu Christi, qui unus et solus habet potestatem et præponendi nos in ecclesiæ suæ gubernatione, et de actu nostro judicandi*¹.

¹ See Cyprian's introductory discourse at the opening of the Council of Carthage, A.D. 256.

Such was the decisive language of the distinguished writers in the Cyprianic age. It is so strong that very few objectors deny Episcopacy to have been at that period fully established, however anxious that the fact should be otherwise. Their only resource is to maintain that the Bishops of that time were the first Bishops, in the modern sense of the title. They stigmatize St. Cyprian and his contemporaries as innovators, who took advantage of the indolence and compliant humour of the Presbyters and of the Church. But this notion is abundantly contradicted, as we shall see hereafter more at large, by the moral character of those illustrious Prelates and holy martyrs ; by their reverence on all occasions for primitive and apostolic custom ; by the indignant horror which they express against all change in sacred institutions ; by their continual appeals to Divine authority, in opposition to recent practices of human invention ; and lastly, by their censure of their Presbyters for not yielding the same dutiful submission to them as had never been refused to their predecessors. " What danger," St. Cyprian indignantly asks, " ought we not to fear from God's displeasure, when certain Presbyters, neither mindful of the Gospel, nor of their own station in the Church, regardless alike of the future judgment of God, and of the Bishop who is set over them, in contempt and neglect of their superior, arrogate everything to themselves ; an act of insubordination

DISS. I. *never in any instance attempted against our prede-*
 CHAP. II. *cessors* ¹.”

The Nova-
 tians.

In further illustration of the views on the subject of Church polity, universally prevalent in the days of St. Cyprian, the following narrative may be not uninteresting to the reader. About A.D. 250, when Cornelius was a candidate for the Bishoprick of Rome, his election was opposed by a Presbyter, called Novatian. The rigid and austere character of the latter inclined him to regard Cornelius as disposed too favourably and leniently towards those apostates or *lapsed*s, who, during the cruel persecution just mentioned, under the Emperor Decius, had renounced Christianity. On the election of Cornelius, his disappointed opposer formed a new sect, called from him Novatians; and drew over to that party a number of the most influential Christians in the imperial city. Some of these, however, deserted him soon afterwards, and returned to the communion of the Church, with the following remarkable profession of their faith. “We acknowledge that Cornelius is chosen Bishop of this most holy Catholic Church by the omni-

¹ *Quod enim periculum metuere non debemus, de offensâ Domini, quando aliqui de Presbyteris, nec evangelii, nec loci sui memores, sed neque futurum Domini judicium, neque sibi præpositum episcopum cogitantes quod nunquam omnino sub antecessoribus factum est, cum contumeliâ et contemptu præpositi, totum sibi vindicent?*
 —Cyp. Presb. et Diacon. Ep. xvi. p. 36.

For further information see note (H) at the end of the volume.

potent God, and by our Lord Jesus Christ. We confess our errors ; we have been imposed upon ; we have been abused by treachery and ensnaring loquacity ; for we are not ignorant that there is one God, one Lord Jesus Christ, whom we have confessed, and one Holy Ghost, and that there ought to be one Bishop in a Catholic Church ¹."

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After having referred to so many respectable authorities contemporary with St. Cyprian ² in Europe, Asia, and Africa, more particularly to Cornelius of Rome ; to Firmilian of Neo-Cæsarea, in Cappadocia ; and to Dionysius of Alexandria, we might be expected to proceed immediately to later times. But one more testimony, that of Alexander, Bishop of the parent Church at Jerusalem, is

Alexander
of Jerusa-
lem.

¹ *Nos Cornelium episcopum sanctissimæ Catholicæ ecclesiæ electum a Deo omnipotente et Christo Domino nostro scimus. Nos errorem nostrum confitemur : nos imposturam passi sumus. Circumventi sumus perfidiâ et loquacitate captiosi. Nec enim ignoramus unum Deum esse, unum Christum esse Dominum quem confessi sumus, unum Spiritum Sanctum, unum episcopum in Catholicâ Ecclesiâ esse debere.*—Ep. xlix.

² Among other authorities at this period may be mentioned an African Bishop, Clarus a Musculâ, who gives his sentiments on the subject of Church polity in the following strong terms :—
"The determination of our Lord Jesus Christ is manifest ; for he sent his Apostles, and committed to them alone the power given him by his Father : to them we (Bishops) have succeeded, governing the Church of Christ by the same power." *Manifesta est sententia Domini nostri, Jesu Christi ; Apostolos suos mittentis, et ipsis solis potestatem a patre sibi datam permittentis, quibus nos successimus, eâdem potestate, ecclesiam Dei gubernantes.* Suff. 79. See Bishop Sage's Vindication, chap. 6. Sec. 69. p. 297.

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peculiarly interesting, as it illustrates the facility with which reference at that time might almost immediately be made to the oral declarations of the Apostles themselves. For, this Bishop was appointed about A.D. 212, assistant and successor in that see, to Narcissus ; who was then one hundred and sixteen years of age, and consequently must have been born before the death of the Apostle John. The appointment of Alexander to his bishopric is stated by Eusebius to have taken place *οἰκονομή Θεοῦ*, by the direction of God, and Alexander writes to the Church of Antioch his congratulations on the promotion of Asclepiades to their Episcopal chair. He tells them that his own bonds became easy and light to him, when he heard that so excellent and fit a person was made their Bishop by the special favour of God (*κατὰ τὴν θείαν πρόνοιαν*)¹.

Corroborative testimonies since Constantine.

We now come to that period, when, in the reign

¹ Vid. Euseb. Hist. Ecc. cap. 111. It is not on any testimony, however early or respectable, taken *singly*, that we rest our cause, but we base it on the general consent of antiquity. That this has not been the practice of our anti-episcopalians brethren may be seen from Blondel, their avowedly greatest champion, who, in a work entitled "Apologia pro sententiâ Hieronymi," has exhausted the resources of his almost unrivalled learning, to illustrate, in 549 closely printed quarto pages of Latin, a solitary passage from one of the Fathers, and that Father of considerably later date than we have yet arrived at. If the diligence and sagacity of Blondel could have discovered any earlier authority clearly apposite to his purpose, he would certainly have selected it for the subject of his treatise.

of Constantine, commonly styled the first Christian Emperor, the Church was politically established ; and when many important members of it will be familiar to our readers as not only conspicuous in ecclesiastical but in civil History. We shall not find it necessary to bring forward here, any more than in the preceding pages, every possible authority : but shall confine our references to such writers as are most eminent for learning, integrity, and ability ; or such as have been most confidently and frequently adduced by the anti-episcopalian advocate as unfavourable to our cause.

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In the latter class of writers, we by no means reckon EUSEBIUS, the first distinguished name that occurs in the annals of Constantine. This great historian was born at Cæsarea, in Palestine, about A.D. 270. He took the surname of Pamphilus, in honour of his friend, a Presbyter of that city, who suffered martyrdom, A.D. 309. Elevated, not long after, to the Bishopric of Cæsarea, Eusebius obtained the confidence of the Emperor, and took a leading part in the ecclesiastical transactions of that busy period. He was suspected of Arianism, and perhaps may not have been strictly orthodox on the Arian question ; yet at the council of Nice, held in the year 325, at which he assisted, he subscribed to the well known Nicene creed of our Liturgy. The honourable mind of this great person is fully shown in his refusal of the Patriarchal chair of Antioch, because he was of opinion that Eustathius, the preceding Bishop, his enemy and rival, had been un-

Eusebius.

DISS. I. justly deposed. To Eusebius the Church is beyond
CHAP. II. comparison indebted, more than to any uninspired
writer, for the treasures of Christian antiquity
which he has transmitted to later times. He died
in the year 339 or 340.

We have already made quotations so frequently from the writings of Eusebius, that one further passage may suffice. "How many of the Apostles' Disciples, and who they were, that faithfully copied the example of the Apostles, and were proved to be shepherds of the Churches which they founded, is not easy to say, besides those whom Paul mentions. He had, indeed, a great number of assistants, and, as he calls them, fellow-soldiers, whose memories are preserved to all posterity in his Epistles. And Luke, in the Acts of the Apostles, mentions some of them by name. Of these, Timothy is related to have been Bishop of Ephesus; Titus of the Churches in Crete." Shortly after he proceeds: "Crescens was sent to Gallia" (Galatia), "as St. Paul himself is witness: Linus, whom he mentions in his second Epistle to Timothy, as being at Rome with him, was made Bishop of Rome next after Peter: Clemens, who was the third Bishop of Rome, is owned by St. Paul, as his fellow labourer and fellow wrestler: and Dionysius the Areopagite, whom Luke mentions as Paul's first convert, (after his oration in the Areopagus at Athens,) is related to have been the first Bishop of that Church by another Dionysius, a very ancient writer, and Bishop of Corinth. And in the sequel

of this history, the succession of Bishops from the Apostles shall be set down in their order¹." So writes this "most diligent investigator of antiquity," as St. Jerome terms him².

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ATHANASIUS, who while the Christian Church remains, will always be remembered, not only as the great opponent of Arianism, and champion of sound doctrine; but as giving a title to the celebrated creed, which (though not composed by him,) contains a summary of his principles, was born at Alexandria, towards the close of the third century. At the general council of Nice, already adverted to, he distinguished himself, though a very young Deacon, by his ready eloquence and powerful argumentation: insomuch, that his own Diocesan, the aged Bishop of Alexandria, fixed at once upon his youthful secretary as his most eligible successor. The modesty, however, of Athanasius, declined the honours intended for him. He even fled to avoid them. But he yielded to the dying wishes of his patron, and was elected Bishop with the unanimous approbation of his countrymen and fellow-citizens. The persecutions which he suffered through the jealousy of his Arian rivals, under a succession of Emperors, from Constantine to Valens; his repeated wanderings, perplexities, and escapes, throughout various provinces of the Roman empire;

Athanasius.

¹ Euseb. Hist. lib. iii. cap. 4. Ἀλλὰ γὰρ ὁδὸν προβαίνουσιν, ἐπὶ καιροῦ κατὰ τοὺς χρόνους τῶν Ἀποστόλων διαδοχῆς ἡμῖν εἰρήσεται.

² Hieron. de Scriptor. Eccl. v. 1. c. 81.

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his steadfast adherence to the faith, amidst all difficulties ; his condemnation and degradation by the western councils of Arles and Milan, and by the councils of Tyre and Antioch in the East ; his final restoration to the Archiepiscopal throne ; and his death in peace and tranquillity, and in the midst of his own people, who had all along, during the forty-six years of his Episcopate, been devotedly attached to him : though these are circumstances not necessarily connected with our present subject, yet they are among the most important and most interesting events in the history of those times.

This illustrious theologian regarded the Episcopal order in the light of a divine institution. " If," says he, in an epistle to Dracontius, (who, about A.D. 354, had refused to accept a Bishopric, through dread of Arian persecution,) " If the government of the Churches do not please you, and you think the office of a Bishop has no reward, thereby making yourself a despiser of our Saviour who founded it ; I beseech you, surmise not any such things as these, nor countenance such persons as maintain them : this would be unworthy of Dracontius. For whatever things the Lord appointed by his Apostles, remain both good and sure." He afterwards proceeds : " If all our predecessors had been of the same mind, how could you have become a Christian, since there would have been no Bishops ? And if our cotemporaries take up the same resolution, how can the Churches subsist ?" Here he plainly declares that the Episcopal order

was of our Saviour's own appointment, and essential to the constitution of the Church ¹.

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The opinion of Athanasius on the Episcopal order may be further ascertained, from a remarkable anecdote recorded in his works. Colluthus, once a Presbyter of Alexandria, having a dispute with his Diocesan, usurped the office of a Bishop, and laid his hands on several persons, who accordingly took upon them the name and office of Presbyters. A council was held at Alexandria, to examine into this violation of ecclesiastical discipline; when a decree was passed, that the pseudo-Presbyters should be reduced to the same station in the Church, which they held previous to their irregular ordination. One of them, named Ischyras, some time afterwards presuming to perform the sacramental office, was thrust aside by one of the officiating ministers. Ischyras complained to the Bishop: the Synod was assembled, the cause tried a second time, and a decision unanimously adopted, that Ischyras was not a Presbyter; for that he had only been ordained by Colluthus, who had no episcopal authority. In this degraded state Ischyras received the sacrament as a layman; "A thing so public,"

¹ Athan. Epist. ad Diacon. Εἰ δὲ τῶν ἐκκλησιῶν ἡ διάταξις οὐκ ἀρέσκει σοι, οὐδὲ νομίζεις τὸ ἐπισκοπῆς λειτουργήμα μισθὸν ἔχειν, ἀλλὰ καταφρονεῖν τοῦ ταῦτα διαταξαμένου σωτῆρος πεποιήκας σεαυτόν.—Ἄ γὰρ ὁ Κύριος, διὰ τῶν ἀποστόλων, τετύπωσεν, ταῦτα καλὰ καὶ βέβαια μένει.—Εἰ γὰρ τὸν αὐτὸν νοῦν εἶχον πάντες, οἷον νῦν ἔχουσιν οἱ συμβουλευόντές σοι, πῶς ἂν ἐγένου σὺ χριστιανός, ἐπισκόπων μὴ ὄντων; ἐὰν δὲ οἱ μεθ' ἡμᾶς ἀναλάβωσιν τὸν τοιοῦτον νοῦν, πῶς ἂν συστήναι δυνήσωνται αἱ ἐκκλησίαι;

DISS. I. says Athanasius, "that no man doubted its occurrence ;" (ὡς οὐδένι καθήσκειν ἀμφίβολον¹.)

CHAP. II.

Optatus.

OPTATUS, Bishop of Milevi, in Numidia, is another authority, who, though not conspicuous in political history, and, therefore, not familiar to the general reader, has however the high commendation of St. Augustine bestowed upon him ; that like that "most delightful and learned author, and most blessed martyr Cyprian²," he came over to Christianity, bringing with him "all the treasures of Egypt³," the treasures namely of eloquence and erudition. This richly gifted individual expresses his concern on the subject of ecclesiastical subordination in these terms. "The Church has her several members, Bishops, Presbyters, Deacons, and the⁴ company of the faithful." And again, writing against the Donatists, a sect, who under pretence of peculiar sanctity, refused to acknowledge the clergy of the Church, he says, "You found in the Church Deacons, Presbyters, Bishops ; you have made them laymen ; acknowledge that you have subverted souls⁵."

¹ Vide Athanas. in Apol. 2. For two similar histories see note (I) at the end of the volume.

² *Cyprianus doctor suavissimus et martyr beatissimus.* August. de Doctr. Christ. lib. ii. cap. 40. n. 61. t. iii.

³ Auro et argento et veste suffarcinatus.—Ibid.

⁴ Certa membra sua habet ecclesia, Episcopos, Presbyteros, Diaconos, et turbam fidelium.—Vide Optat. contra Parmenianum, lib. ii.

⁵ Invenistis Diaconos, Presbyteros, Episcopos ; fecistis laicos. Agnoscite vos animas evertisse.—Ibid.

Ambrosius, or **ST. AMBROSE**, may be already known to the reader as the author of that sublime composition, the hymn of praise called the “*Te Deum*.” He was born of a noble Roman family, A.D. 333, in the province of Gaul, of which his father was at that time præfect. His early studies were directed to secular learning, and more especially to jurisprudence, and his legal talents raised him to the governorship of Liguria and Emilia, comprehending the greater part of the north of Italy. In Milan, the metropolis, he resided as governor till the year 374, when we find him suddenly brought forward in a new capacity. On the death of Auxentius, Bishop of Milan, the election of his successor gave rise to such alarming tumults between the Arian and Catholic Bishops, and their respective partisans, that Ambrose, as chief magistrate, hastened to the cathedral for the purpose of restoring order. His presence, his high character, his popularity with all parties, and his judicious conduct on this occasion, had such extraordinary influence, that when some one in the crowd exclaimed “*Let Ambrose be Bishop*,” the exclamation was repeated universally: the assembled Bishops gave their votes in his favour: and the astonished præfect, who at first took to flight, in order to save himself from this ecclesiastical dignity, at length yielded to the importunities of the people. He held the Bishopric of Milan for twenty-three years, and died A.D. 397, after a course of distinguished public usefulness, not only

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 St. Ambrose.

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as an orthodox teacher and defender of religion, but in some instances, as a skilful diplomatist ; particularly in his bold and eloquent expostulation with the tyrant Maximus, which prevented the invasion and probable ruin of the province.

This acute and disinterested authority, in a work on the sacrament, alludes to the Divine distribution of ecclesiastical functions and responsibilities, and the three distinct orders of clergy. "One duty," he says, "is divinely required of Bishops, another of Priests, and another of Deacons¹." He afterwards adds : "In order that we may describe, in all its particulars, the duty and jurisdiction of a Bishop ; we must examine in succession the rules which the Apostle has prescribed for every act of the Episcopal office²." This quotation is immediately followed by a chapter on the subject of ordination. In his work on the sacrament, the same author avers, "Although Presbyters baptize, yet they derive their authority from the Chief Priest," namely from the Bishop³.

¹ *Aliud est enim quod ab Episcopo requirit Deus, et aliud quod a Presbytero, et aliud quod a Diacono.* Ambros. lib. de dignit. sacerdot. sub finem. cap. 4.

² *Et ut specialiter ipsius episcopatus modum et formulam omnibus sacerdotibus depingamus, Apostolica est nobis regula revolvenda, quæ de iis per singula episcopales actus depingit.* Ibid. cap. 5.

³ *Licet Presbyteri fecerint, tamen exordium ministerii a summo est sacerdote.* Ambros. de Sacrament. lib. iii. cap. 1.

Some further quotations from St. Ambrose will be found in Bishop Taylor's *Episcopacy Asserted*, sec. 12.

Other very ancient writings, attributed to St. Ambrose, and which are generally bound up with his works, contain numerous passages not less explicit than those which we have quoted. In a commentary on the fourth chapter of Ephesians, with respect to St. Paul's declaration, "He" (Christ) "gave some Apostles, and some Prophets, and some Evangelists," this author says, "The Apostles are now the Bishops; the Prophets expounders of the Scriptures, as was Agabus; the Evangelists, Deacons, as was Philip: for all these orders centre in the Bishop, because he is the head priest, that is head of the priests; and both Prophet and Evangelist, to supply all the offices of the Church, for the ministry of the faithful¹." This writer then maintains that at the foundation of the Church, all Bishops were Apostles: and in consequence of this opinion, he says, (in his commentary on the Epistle to the Galatians,) that St. Paul, to distinguish himself from succeeding and inferior Apostles, calls himself an Apostle not of man, nor sent by man to preach, as those others were, who were chosen and sent by the Apostles to confirm the Churches².

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¹ *Apostoli episcopi sunt: prophetæ explanatores sunt scripturarum, sicut Agabus. Evangelistæ diaconi sunt, sicut fuit Philippus. Nam in episcopo omnes ordines sunt, quia princeps sacerdos est, hoc est, princeps est sacerdotum, et propheta et evangelista et cætera ad implenda officia ecclesiæ in ministerio fidelium.* Ambros. Com. in Eph. iv. 11.

² Ibid. Com. in Gal. i. 1.

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St Jerome.

Eusebius Hieronymus, or **ST. JEROME**, to whom the Church is under lasting obligations for his translation of the Scriptures called the Vulgate, was born at Stridon, near the confines of Dalmatia and Pannonia, towards the middle of the fourth century. An excellent education at Rome, joined to considerable talent and unwearied industry, raised him to equality with the profoundest linguists and theologians of his time. From the love of study and meditation he secluded himself in one of the most frightful deserts of Syria for several years; deriving his sole support in that monastic retirement from the friendship of Evagrius, a rich citizen of Antioch. Loss of health forced this austere student again into society: and in A.D. 378 he was ordained a Presbyter at Antioch, stipulating with Paulinus the patriarch, that he should have no regular duties as a parochial minister; but should be permitted to enjoy, unrestricted, his literary inclinations. Availing himself of this liberty, he visited Constantinople; journeyed to Rome, where he became secretary to Pope Damasus; proceeded, on the death of that Pontiff, to Cyprus; and thence returned A.D. 385 to Antioch. This learned and pious traveller next accompanied his Bishop, Paulinus, in the very severe winter of that year, to Jerusalem: where, he informs us, that he beheld many marvellous things (*multa miracula*), and satisfied himself with his own eyes of what he only had before heard by report. After this he made a pilgrimage to Egypt; spent some

time both at the Nitrensian monastery and at Alexandria : and finally settled in a rigid life of studious seclusion at Bethlehem, where he was consulted as a kind of oracle ; and employed himself till his death, (at the age of ninety-one,) in communicating to a number of distinguished scholars those treasures of various erudition which he had so long and so indefatigably accumulated.

Like many other ancient writers (of which number we have already quoted Clement of Rome,) Jerome traces the different orders of Christian ministers to the Mosaic dispensation. "In order that we may know," says he, "the apostolical economy to be taken from the pattern in the Old Testament ; we see that what Aaron and his sons, and the Levites were in the temple, the same are Bishops, Presbyters, and Deacons in the Church of Christ¹."

Again in the same Epistle : "Neither the pomp of riches, nor the lowliness of poverty, makes a Bishop greater or less ; all alike are successors of the Apostles²."

In a work against heretics, he writes, "The safety of the Church depends upon the dignity of the Chief Priest, to whom, unless a kind of absolute

¹ *Ut sciamus traditiones Apostolicas sumptas de veteri testamento ; quod Aaron et filii ejus, atque Levitæ in templo fuerunt, hoc sibi Episcopi, Presbyteri et Diaconi vindicant in ecclesiâ.*—Hieron. Epist. ad Evag.

² *Potentia divitiarum et paupertatis humilitas sublimiorem vel inferiorem episcopum non facit, cæterum omnes Apostolorum successores sunt.*—Ibid.

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and pre-eminent power were given, there would be as many schisms in the Church as there are Priests. Hence it is, that without the command of the Bishop, neither a Presbyter nor a Deacon can baptize.—The Bishop is to impose his hands on those who have been baptized by Presbyters and Deacons, for the invocation of the Holy Spirit ¹.”

To conclude with one more quotation. In his work against Montanus, Jerome thus expresses himself: “With us the Bishops hold the place of the Apostles ².”

The reader will find it useful to bear in mind these quotations; as the sentiments of this Father will be found in a future stage of this discussion more important, than might be imagined, considering the late period at which he flourished.

St. Augustine.

Aurelius Augustinus, ST. AUGUSTINE, or *St. Austin*, the great contemporary of the last mentioned writer, was an African, born of Christian parents in A.D. 354, at Tagasta, in Numidia. Notwithstanding the affectionate endeavours of his mother Monica for his instruction, moral and religious, he was cor-

¹ *Ecclesiæ salus in summi sacerdotis dignitate pendet; cui nisi exors quædam et ab omnibus eminens detur potestas, tot in ecclesiâ efficiuntur schismata quot sacerdotes. Inde venit ut, sine episcopi jussione, neque Presbyter neque Diaconus jus habeant baptizandi.—Ad eos, qui per Presbyteros et Diaconos baptizati sunt, episcopus ad invocationem Sancti Spiritus manum impositurus excurrat.—Idem, advers. Luciferianos.*

² *Apud nos, Apostolorum locum Episcopi tenent.—Idem, Epist. 54 cont. Montanum.*

rupted in early life by the heresy of the Manichæans, who believed the universe to be governed jointly by an evil and a good principle. He abandoned himself to habits of irregularity and irreligion; but was at last converted from his errors and vices, by the eloquence of St. Ambrose, Bishop of Milan, and by the tears of his mother Monica, who had followed her misguided son to that city. He was baptized by Ambrose, and returning to his native country, became so conspicuous at Hippo for his piety and entire reformation, that he was ordained a Presbyter by Valerius, Bishop of that city, at the urgent request of the people. He approved himself so effectually to his Diocesan, that Valerius, contrary to the established usage of the African church, admitted him, though a Presbyter, to take his turn as a preacher even in the Episcopal presence. The friendship of his patron did not end here: Valerius, overtaken by age and infirmities, obtained for Augustine the nomination to be his colleague and successor. No writer or divine, as a controversialist, was ever more warmly, more variously, or more successfully engaged than this extraordinary man. His contests, both in the character of a defender, and of an assailant against the Manichæans, the Donatists, the Circumcellians, Pelagians, Arians, and other heretics, were carried on by writing and preaching uninterruptedly for forty years. During the whole of this laborious career, his genius, his courage, and his industry never failed him: he presided or took a leading

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part in ten different synods and conferences : and has left to the world, almost a library of divinity in his own works, the remains of which supply the chief materials for eleven valuable folios, on nearly every subject connected with Christian faith and practice. These works, perhaps, might have been still more valuable, if a more perfect knowledge of the Greek language had enabled him to consult, on some points, the earlier Christian Fathers, most of whom wrote in Greek. He was very sensible, however, of his deficiencies in this respect ; and at one time requested of St. Jerome, his friend, to translate for him, and for the African Churches, the commentaries of the Grecian Fathers upon the Scripture ¹. The invasion of Africa by the Vandals, put a melancholy close to the pious labours of, perhaps, the last Bishop of Hippo. The time was now come, when the tumults of Christian controversy were to cease in that continent. The churchman and the sectary, the catholic and the heretic were about to fill one common grave under the ruins of their church itself, which for ages had been the glory of Christendom, in literature, in piety, and in firmness under persecution. When the barbarian con-

¹ *Quod si Græcæ linguæ non sit nobis tantus habitus, ut talium rerum libris legendis et intelligendis ullo modo reperiamur idonei, &c.*—De Trinit. lib. iii. tom. viii.

Petimus ergo, et nobiscum petit omnis Africanarum ecclesiarum studiosa societas, ut, in interpretandis eorum libris qui Græcæ scripturas nostras quam optime tractaverunt, curam atque operam impendere non graveris.—Epist. 65. ad Hieron. tom. iv. p. 601.

querors drew near to Hippo, after having desolated every previous territory through which they passed, the venerable Bishop, (now in his seventy-sixth year,) exhorted his countrymen and people to maintain their ground; and uttered the remarkable prayer, that God would either grant them deliverance, or remove him from life. The result was answerable to his prayer, though fatal to his country. He died of a fever shortly before the capture and destruction of the city.

We now, as we have before done, proceed to quote passages, which illustrate the sentiments of this great writer on the subject of Church Polity. "The determination of our Lord Jesus Christ is manifest, who sent his Apostles, and confided to them alone the authority which had been committed to himself by the Father. We, their successors, govern the Church by the same authority¹."

In his commentary on the sixteenth verse of the forty-fifth psalm, "Instead of thy Fathers thou shalt have children, whom thou mayest make princes in all lands," he asks, "what is the meaning of this expression, Instead of thy Fathers thou shalt have children? The Apostles were sent as the Fathers; instead of the Apostles, sons are born unto thee, namely, those who are appointed Bishops²."

¹ *Manifesta est sententia Domini nostri Jesu Christi Apostolos suos mittentis, et ipsis solis potestatem a patre sibi traditam permittentis; quibus nos successimus, eadem potestate ecclesiam Domini gubernantes.*—Vide Aug. Quæst. Vet. et Nov. Test. lib. vii. c. 43.

² *Pro Apostolis nati sunt filii tibi, constituti sunt Episcopi.*—Aug. Com. in Psalm. xiv. 16. p. 169.

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Again, he elsewhere observes, “ The King bears the image of God, as the Bishop does of Christ; therefore while he is in that station, he is to be honoured, if not for himself, yet for his order¹. ”

Among numerous other passages, we shall now confine ourselves to a single one : “ No man is ignorant that the Saviour appointed Bishops in the Churches; for, before his ascension, laying his hands upon the Apostles, he ordained them Bishops². ”

St. Chry-
sostom,

John of Constantinople, surnamed CHRYSOSTOM, from the splendour of his eloquence, was born at Antioch, about A.D. 347. He studied under that great master of rhetoric Libanius, but forming, (like St. Jerome,) an attachment to a secluded life, his great rhetorical powers were long dormant. He passed a period of four years in the company of an aged hermit; and for two years after confined himself entirely to solitude in a cave: until, like St. Jerome, he was compelled by exhaustion and loss of health to revisit the world. He was successively ordained Deacon and Presbyter; and gained such universal fame by his powers of eloquence, that, on the death of Nectarius, he was summoned by the Emperor Arcadius to occupy the patriarchal throne of Constantinople. His zeal as

¹ *Dei enim imaginem habet rex, sicut et Episcopus Christi. Quamdiu ergo in eâ traditione est, honorandus est, si non propter se, vel propter ordinem.*—August. Quæst. e Vet. Test. 35.

² *Nemo ignorat Salvatorem Episcopos ecclesiis instituisse; ipse enim priusquam celos ascenderet, imponens manus Apostolis, ordinavit eos Episcopos.*—Vide August. Quæs. Vet. et Nov. Test. 97.

a reformer of the Church and Imperial Court created more hostility than his piety and popular virtues conciliated friendship: and he was at last banished to a miserable desert in Lesser Asia, near the shores of the Euxine; where, exhausted with labours, anxieties, and sufferings, he died A.D. 407, in the fifty-second year of his age.

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Our chief reason for appealing to St. Chrysostom on the subject of Episcopacy, is, that he has been considered the least favourable of the Fathers, with the exception of St. Jerome, to the Episcopalian cause. And yet the intelligent reader will perceive, even from the following extract, (which has been quoted by objectors to the Church of England polity,) that the golden lips of the eloquent Chrysostom were never opened for the purpose alleged; but that even where his argument leads him to exalt the Presbyter at the expense of the Bishop, he nevertheless is careful to preserve the main distinction between them for which we have contended. "The reason," he says, in his eleventh homily on the first Epistle to Timothy, "the reason why the Apostle, having delivered rules for the behaviour of Bishops, immediately proceeds to the Deacons, without mentioning the intermediate order of Presbyters, was this, that there was not a great difference between them and Bishops: for even Presbyters are entrusted to teach, and to preside in the Church; so that the same rules which are prescribed for Bishops may also serve for Presbyters: a Bishop can discharge no function, except

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imposition of hands which may not be exercised by Presbyters¹." The importance which Chrysostom attached to imposition of hands we learn from another passage of his writings, where he calls this episcopal prerogative, the chief and principal of all Ecclesiastical powers, and that which mainly preserves and holds together the Christian Church².

In his homily on the sixth chapter of the book of Acts, where the election of Deacons is related, St. Chrysostom makes the remarkable declaration, "There was then no Bishop in the Church, excepting the Apostles³."

We might now conclude these quotations, but that the opinions of THEODORET, (a disciple of St. Chrysostom) are so important and so clearly stated, that we cannot pass them over in silence. Theodoret was born of an opulent Syrian family at Antioch, about A.D. 386; and having taken in due time the regular orders, was prevailed upon by the Patriarch of Antioch, to accept the Bishopric of Cyrus, a remote but populous city, of which the inhabitants were barbarous or heretical: he devoted the

¹ Τῇ γὰρ χειροτονίᾳ μόνῃ ὑπερβεβήκασι, καὶ τούτῳ μόνον δοκοῦσι πλεονεκτεῖν τοὺς πρεσβυτέρους.

² Πάντων μάλιστα κυριώτατον, καὶ ὁ μάλιστα συνέχει τὴν ἐκκλησίαν, τὸ τῶν χειροτονιῶν.—Hom. xvi. in 1 Tim.

³ Καί, τοι οὐδέπω οὐδεὶς ἐπίσκοπος ἦν, ἀλλ' οἱ ἀπόστολοι μόνον.—Hom. xiv. in Act. vi.

In this passage is implied, (what we have often stated,) the succession of Bishops to the Apostolical superintendence of the Church.

remainder of his long life to their civilization and instruction, and died about A.D. 457, above seventy years of age. His chief works are commentaries on the Holy Scripture, and a history of the Church. They are much admired for purity of style, accuracy of research, and soundness of theology.

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The sentiments of Theodoret conveyed in the following quotations, are peculiarly important to us; since he explains with great clearness the origin of that confusion of names which prevailed at the first formation of the Church, and which has been so repeatedly insisted on by the opposers of Episcopacy, as favourable to their views. Commenting on the first verse of the Epistle to the Philippians, ("Paul and Timotheus, the servants of Jesus Christ, to all the saints in Christ Jesus, which are at Philippi, with the Bishops and Deacons,") Theodoret observes, that the word Bishops here means Presbyters; and that Epaphroditus, who was then along with St. Paul, and by whom he sent this Epistle, was, strictly speaking, the Bishop of Philippi. "In the Epistle itself," says he, "he called the blessed Epaphroditus their Apostle. He, therefore, plainly showed that the Episcopal office was entrusted to him, when he gave him the name of Apostle." Again, in reference to chap. ii. ver. 25. the same author remarks; "St. Paul called him their Apostle, as the person to whom the care of them was entrusted — so as to make it evident that those Church officers ministered under him, who, in the beginning, were called Bishops, while

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they belonged to the order of Presbyters.” In his commentary on Timothy, chap. iii. Theodoret explains his sentiments still further ; “ The name of Presbyter and Bishop was given formerly to one and the same person : while persons now called Bishops were termed Apostles. In process of time, however, the title of the Apostleship was appropriated to persons really Apostles, and that of the Episcopate was applied to those who before were styled Apostles. Thus Epaphroditus was the Apostle of the Philippians, Titus of the Cretans, and Timothy of the Asiatics ¹.”

The most scrupulous inquirer can scarcely fail to anticipate that the ancient and conspicuous rulers of the Church so profusely quoted in the preceding pages, would, from their character of fearless sincerity and consistent piety, maintain publicly in synods, conferences, and general councils the same principles on Church Polity which, as we have seen, they promulgate distinctly and confidently in their writings. On this account there is less necessity for transcribing at any length from the various ecclesiastical canons established from time to time to regulate the appointment, and specify the duties of the three different orders. The most important reference for this purpose is the book, entitled “ Apostolic Canons,” which, though not so ancient

¹ Τοὺς αὐτοὺς ἐκάλουν ποτε Πρεσβυτέρους καὶ Ἐπισκόπους, τοὺς δὲ νῦν καλουμένους Ἐπισκόπους, Ἀποστόλους ὀνόμαζον.—Com. in 1. Tim. iii.

as the title “Apostolic” would imply, nor as some learned critics have maintained, is nevertheless of great and acknowledged antiquity. That it contains rules of discipline traditionally preserved and gathered from the general practice of the primitive times we are as fully warranted in maintaining, as that the long known declaration of our Faith, called the Apostles’ creed, (and which we cannot trace to the Apostles as its authors,) contains a genuine summary of Apostolic doctrine ¹.

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¹ For quotations from the Apostolic Canons, as well as from the decrees of various councils, respecting clerical subordination, and the several descriptions of Church officers, see note (I) at the end of the volume.

CHAPTER III.

DISS. I.

CHAP. III.

Reply to
anti-episco-
pal objec-
tions.

THE evidence advanced in the preceding chapters, both from Scripture and from primitive antiquity, to prove the Apostolic institution of Episcopal Church polity, contains a very small proportion only of the testimonies which might have been brought forward, had this discourse been intended to exhaust the whole subject, and to pursue every topic of inquiry through every possible ramification. But it seems extremely probable that the general reader, already weary of our quotations, or perhaps pronouncing them superabundant, will now be less desirous of further arguments than curious to know by what methods those which we have adduced are replied to, or evaded by our anti-episcopal brethren. He will now be prepared to ask, what authorities do they appeal to, as of sufficient weight to counterbalance such a host of witnesses? How can they, without self-condemnation, lift up their voices against the concurrent voice of all antiquity? or how pretend to understand and explain the constitution of the ancient Church of Christ more correctly than the ancients themselves? The expedients which at different times have been resorted

to for eluding our deductions from Scripture and from antiquity, are numerous and often plausible, but will not bear the test of careful investigation. We propose examining in succession a few of the most specious and popular.

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1. The first of these fallacies to be mentioned respects accidental omissions by the Fathers in their enumeration of Church offices. Whenever any Father has occasion in his writings to name two only among the three offices, an inference is confidently and absurdly made that the office which he omits must be the Episcopal ; that Presbyters and Deacons must alone have existed in his time ; and that Bishops, consequently, must be an invention of later ages. And this confident inference is not supposed to be at all invalidated by the fact, that the very same Father, (in other passages of the very work which they appeal to,) alludes distinctly to the existence of three orders, and regards Episcopacy in particular as an Apostolical institution. These reasoners appear to value more highly what a writer has not written than what he has written. They place more reliance upon the silence, than upon the speech of a witness. They supply all deficiencies from the stores of their own ingenuity, and attach more importance to his omissions in some one instance than to his direct assertion in many others.

First objection, omissions by the Fathers.

Thus the Bishop of Rome, St. Clement, styled by the Romanists Pope Clement the first, mentions (in his epistle to the Corinthians, already largely quoted from,) that the Apostles, after preaching

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through various countries, ordained Bishops and Deacons out of the best qualified of their disciples : and he refers to the following prophecy of Isaiah as a warrant for these ordinations—" I will appoint their overseers" (bishops) " in righteousness, and their ministers" (deacons) " in faith." From this quotation, it has been fallaciously argued, that St. Clement considered Presbyters and Deacons as one and the same order : that this Bishop of Rome had no knowledge of Bishops properly so called : and that all ministerial functions, in his time, were divided between Presbyters and Deacons: Such is the argument from the silence of this holy Father. But let us place beside it the really more important argument from his actual declarations. We have already seen the same venerable writer alluding plainly to the existence of three orders ; asserting the pre-eminence of Bishops, and inculcating subordination upon Presbyters. He draws a clear distinction between the chief rulers (*ἡγούμενοι*, or *præpositi*) and the Presbyters ; he admonishes the people to venerate the former, and to show due reverence for the latter¹. He draws his reason for confining the inferior Christian ministers to their subordinate functions, from the circumstance that three distinct orders of Church officers existed under the Jewish economy ; each order restricted to its own peculiar duties. He exhorts the Corinthians, every one of them to bless God in his proper station, not

¹ See note at the commencement of Chap. II.

exceeding his appointed rule of service: and he insists that greater care to avoid schism and disorder was required in the Christian Church than in the Jewish, conformably to the equitable maxim, “The greater our knowledge, the more fearful our responsibility.”

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That St. Clement should not always give a full enumeration of ecclesiastical dignities, when his subject leads him to mention two of them, is not extraordinary; and affords no proof that he recognised two only. We ourselves, in the prayer for the clergy, mention only “Bishops and Curates:” without meaning to deny that a third order is established in the Church, or intending to confound the two orders of Presbyters and Deacons, for each of which we have distinct duties and distinct forms of ordination. As another instance of similar omission, we may refer to the fifteenth chapter of the Acts of the Apostles. In that single chapter there is mention no less than five times, of “Apostles and Elders,” or of “Apostles, Elders and Brethren” in the Church of Jerusalem; without the slightest notice of Deacons, though Deacons certainly had been before appointed in that Church ¹.

St. Augustin, in like manner, when he conceives the sixteenth verse of the forty-fifth Psalm to be a prophecy concerning the divine appointment of Christian ministers, follows the very method of St. Clement, when the latter, as we have seen, made a similar prophetic application from Isaiah. Isaiah, in his text, had only specified two classes of

¹ Acts vi.

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persons : the Psalmist only notices one. One class only therefore, in the latter instance, and two only in the former, could, without interpolation, have been inferred. Neither Clement, however, nor Augustin could be expected to interpolate the Old Testament ; with a view of obviating the kind of inference from their silence, which, according to the fallacy we are now exposing, might be deduced. The words of St. Augustin are, "What is the meaning of the declaration, Instead of thy Fathers thou shalt have children? The Apostles," he continues, "are the Fathers. Instead of them, sons are born unto thee : namely, those that are called Bishops." How absurd would be a conclusion from this passage, that St. Augustin acknowledged only one class of ministers to be divinely constituted in the Church—namely, the Episcopal.

But an omission still more apposite to our purpose is made even by St. Clement himself, in the thirty-second chapter of the very Epistle now in question. He speaks of Priests and Levites as the ministers of God's altar, under the Jewish dispensation ; but on the subject of the High Priest he is utterly silent—a silence quite as extraordinary and as effectual to prove the non-existence of the High Priesthood ; as the silence of the same author in the corresponding passage, (so obtrusively insisted on,) is effectual to prove the non-existence of the Episcopate ¹.

¹ It appears a needless concession to allow that St. Clement, when he speaks of "Overseers and Ministers," actually omits the Episcopal order : since perhaps the order really as well as nomi-

But let us see how such a mode of arguing would startle any conscientious reasoner on other subjects of still more serious import. Suppose that any adversary to the doctrine of the Trinity were allowed the same privilege of drawing inferences from omissions: he would quote passages to be found in Scripture where the Father and the Son alone are spoken of, and deny the personality of the Holy Ghost¹. Or again, from other texts which make exclusive mention of the Father and of the Holy Ghost, he would draw conclusions adverse to the divinity of the Son.

But perhaps the most distinct illustration of the absurdity in question may be collected from secular affairs, and from daily circumstances in ordinary life. For instance, let us imagine that any early writer of English history should mention two branches only of our Legislature, the Lords and Commons: would any rational commentator feel entitled to conclude that no third branch existed? that there was then no King in England? and that

nally omitted is that of Presbyters. We have only to assert (and our assertion is as good as that of our opponents) that Presbyters are here included under the general name of Ministers, if the word *minister* be taken in the popular and indefinite acceptation, which then, as now, would occasionally prevail. But, after all, may not St. Clement here refer to the period previous to the nomination of Bishops, when Presbyters and Deacons were the only Church officers whom the Apostles had appointed. It may be added that Episcopacy was of later introduction in Western than in Eastern Christendom.

¹ Col. ii. 2.

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the royal dignity was an institution of later times? Or suppose the same historian, in another page of his history, to mention the King and Lords : would an inference be warranted that no House of Commons then existed, and that the people did not, till afterwards, enjoy a share of political power? more especially if the very same writer, in other parts of his work, should represent King, Lords, and Commons as all of them essential parts of the English constitution¹?

Second ob-
jection.
Modern
sense ap-
plied to an-
cient words
and
phrases.

2. Another practice very frequent with anti-episcopalians is to put a modern construction upon ancient words and phrases, and to insist that the Fathers of the Church must have used them in the same acceptation with ourselves. Thus, because the Greek term *parochia* (παροικία), from which our English word *parish* is derived, was used commonly in the three first centuries, as synonymous with diocese (διοίκησις), to express the territorial limits of a Bishop's jurisdiction, it has been argued that a Bishop in those times held only one Church ; presided only in a single congregation ; and was in fact no higher than a parish priest. No conclusion could be more precipitate nor more unfounded. The word *πάροικοι*, or parishioners, together with various others from the same root, is applied in Scripture to persons not living in the

¹ Should the reader desire further information on this passage from St. Clement, he will find the subject discussed at large by Bishop Beveridge, in the chapter of his work on the Apostolic Canons, entitled "De Episcopis."

same neighbourhood, nor belonging to the same parish church ; but coming from a distance, (Luke xxiv. 18.) or dwelling as strangers and foreigners in a country. (Eph. ii. 19.) The word *paræchia*, among ancient writers, is constantly employed interchangeably with the word *diocese* to signify many parishes in the modern sense : it often means not only many parishes but large cities, whole provinces, or even an entire kingdom. St. Jerome speaks of all Jerusalem as one *paræchia*¹. St. Augustin mentions two towns with the surrounding districts, forty miles asunder, as belonging to the same *paræchia*². Also the venerable Bede, at a still later period, describes the whole kingdom or province of the South Saxons, as included in the *paræchia* of Winchester³.

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CHAP. III.

The number of souls under the same Episcopal jurisdiction must, in many instances, have been as large in ancient times as at the present day. While James, the kinsman of our Lord, was Bishop of Jerusalem, the Jewish converts alone in that populous city, are estimated in the book of Acts, as amounting to many myriads, or tens of thousands⁴.

¹ Vide Hieron. Oper. vol. ii. tom. iii. fol. 71.

² *Fussala simul contigua sibi regione ad paræciam (diocese) Hipponensis ecclesiæ pertinebat*—Fussala ab Hippone millibus quadraginta sejungitur.—August. Oper. tom. ii. pp. 325 et 261.

³ Provincia Australium Saxonum ad civitatis Ventanæ parociam pertinebat.—Bede Eccles. Hist. lib. v. cap. 19.

⁴ Thou seest brother how many thousands (in Greek μυριάδες or myriads) of Jews there are which believe.—Acts xxi. 20.

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The Bishoprics of Rome, Antioch, and Alexandria, equalled in population the largest capitals in modern Europe. That of Rome exceeded a million¹. And in the days of Tertullian, (A.D. 200;) so large a proportion of this vast number were Christians, that with some rhetorical exaggeration he affirms : “ Though we are of yesterday, yet every place is filled with us ; your cities, islands, forts, corporations, councils ; your very armies, tribes, and companies ; nay, the palace, the senate, the forum ; we have left you nothing but your temples. Should such a multitude as we are separate ourselves from you, you would certainly stand amazed at your deserted situation : at the desolate stillness around you ; at, as it were, the stupor of a world in death². ” In a later age (A.D. 386) Theodoret, whom we have before referred to as Bishop of the obscure diocese of Cyrrus, near the borders of the Euphrates, mentions eight hundred churches, as included under his parochial (or episcopal) jurisdiction³. So that the boasted anti-episcopalian argu-

¹ Hume the historian, in his Essay on the populousness of ancient nations, calculates (p. 415) that Alexandria might be a “ city nearly of the same bulk of Paris,” and that Rome might be about the size of London. He quotes Herodian affirming that Antioch was nearly of the same dimensions. Gibbon makes a similar calculation. He estimates the population of Rome in the days of Theodosius at 1,200,000.—See *Decline and Fall*, chap. xxxi. p. 289.

² Tertull. *Apol.* p. 33. cap. 37.

³ Ἐν ὀκτακοσίαις ἐκκλησίαις ἔλαχον ποιμαίνειν, τοσαύτας γὰρ ὁ Κύριός παροικίας ἔχει.—Theod. *Ep.* 113. ad Leon. Blondel

ment from the word *paræchia*, amounts to no more than what might be derived from a corresponding abuse of the word *diocese*. Let the word *diocese* in future times come to signify the small district connected with a single church, so as to bear the same sense among posterity with our present word *parish*: the theologians of futurity would, by this absurd mode of reasoning, be warranted to conclude that the present Diocesans of England were no other than parochial ministers, presiding over single congregations; that all London for example, together with the counties of Essex and Middlesex, formed but one parish; that the people of London, added to the population of those extensive districts, were fellow parishioners (*παροικοί*,) and that the Bishop of London was nothing higher than a parish priest: though proofs from history could abundantly be produced, that the Bishop in question, (like his brethren in other dioceses,) had numerous presbyters and churches under him, over whom he exercised a superintending or episcopal jurisdiction.

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3. Another expedient of our dissenting brethren has been too frequently passed over by the members of our Church, although its fallacy is by no means difficult of detection¹. They date the testimony of every Father only from the period of his

Third objection.
Testimonies post-dated.

mentions Cyrrus as among the largest dioceses of the East.—Blond. Apol. p. 185.

¹ This point is not overlooked by Dr. Russell in his learned and able sermon on Episcopacy, p. 38. London, 1830.

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death ; and not from the time when he first arrived at the use of reason, and became capable of reflection or of observation. To this unfair mode of calculating, they add the unreasonable practice of restricting *our* authorities from antiquity to the writers of the first two centuries ; while for *themselves* they assume a longer and later period of chronological reference¹. It is probable that the groundlessness and arbitrariness of both these restrictions have escaped the notice of the writers who made them : yet they are not, on that account, less groundless or less arbitrary. Why should the evidence of Ignatius, for example, be dated from the day of his martyrdom, (A.D. 110 or 116,) and not at latest from his ordination by the hands of the Apostles ? Surely when he had a competency of Christian knowledge fitting him to be ordained, he was also competent to understand the constitution of the Church, and to know whether that constitution was Independent, Presbyterian, or Episcopal. So also with Irenæus, Tertullian, Clement of Alexandria, Origen, and Cyprian—these historical witnesses were as capable of giving evidence on this question at the age of twenty, as of a hundred.

Restriction
of testi-
mony to the
Apostolic
age.

Again—why restrict us in our quotations to writers of the Apostolic age ? or to writers of a generation or two after the Apostles ? Why exclude authorities from a third or fourth century ? Why

¹ St. Jerome, the supposed champion of anti-episcopal principles, was born about the middle of the fourth century.

close our ears against Eusebius, Athanasius, Augustin, Ambrose, or Theodoret? If, indeed, the testimony of these learned and holy men went no further than to state, that Episcopacy in their times did exist; we might not unfairly have been warned against their testimony as irrelevant or unimportant: but when we hear them bearing witness not merely to the actual existence, but to the Apostolical institution of the Episcopal order; is no attention due to their evidence? no weight or value to be attached to their testimony¹? Can we suppose it possible that such men should deceive us, or be deceived themselves?—men who lived so very near the Apostolic age, and in the very districts where churches, planted by the Apostles, had continued uninterruptedly to flourish—men who had the records and registers of their respective churches before their eyes; and who enjoyed the privilege of consulting those numerous and valuable works of more ancient authors, which (to the unutterable loss of the Christian world) were allowed to perish in the dark ages—men who, as we have seen, studied with so much diligence, erudition, and acuteness, all questions connected, even remotely, with the constitution, doctrine, and discipline of the Church: at a period too, when historical inquiries on those subjects were not as now, so voluminous, nor of such difficulty and intricacy as to perplex the judg-

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¹ I have no where found this distinction insisted on: if, indeed, it has before been noticed.

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ment and overwhelm the memory ; and when the whole range of ecclesiastical history, now embracing eighteen centuries, was comprised in three or four hundred years ? We may add, finally, that these were men (and this is not their least recommendation to our confidence) whose pure and virtuous practice was conformable to the purity of their principles ; and who, many of them, suffered exile, deprivation, and persecution, even to martyrdom, in the cause of truth.

The deceitfulness of this evasion, by which the anti-episcopalian advocate would contract the circle of our authorities from antiquity, may be best exemplified, (like the preceding fallacy,) by familiar illustration. Suppose a question hereafter to arise, at some remote period, and in some distant country, perhaps Australia, two thousand years hence, what was the form of Church polity established in the kingdom of England at the Reformation ? Suppose one party to affirm that it was independent or congregational ; another that it was Presbyterian ; and a third that it was Episcopalian ¹. Suppose, thirdly, that all passages then remaining extant in the works of Cranmer, Ridley, and Latimer, of Jewell,

¹ The supposition in the text will not appear extravagant to any reader who recollects the fact that dissenting writers, even in our own country, and not long after the period in question, have resolutely maintained a Presbyterian church government to have been established in England during the reign of Edward the Sixth.—See Bishop Maddox's Refutation of that hypothesis, contained in note (K) at the end of the volume.

Parker, and Whitgift; of Beveridge, Tillotson, and Taylor, or of any other intermediate writers who might continue to be read and known and quoted at that distance of time, and in that remote situation (however clearly and satisfactorily such quotations might establish Episcopalian church government) did not satisfy the adverse parties; but were partially evaded or ingeniously twisted from their proper meaning: would it be incongruous or inadmissible for the supposed Australian supporter of Episcopacy to adduce later additional authorities from writings of our present times? Might he not with great propriety select even out of this our day, (out of this beginning of a fourth century from that great reforming æra,) a host of unimpeachable witnesses? a body of Bishops, stating that they had themselves succeeded to the sees of the first Reformers; producing lists of prelates from Cranmer, Latimer, and Ridley, down to the date of their own consecration; and affirming that no change whatever had, on this point, occurred in the constitution of the Church? Would the objection be considered fair or warrantable, that a Bishop, in the third or fourth century after the reformation, was liable to be mistaken; that he could only testify to the existence of Episcopacy in these his own days; and that earlier authorities could alone be permitted to give testimony? If the assertors of so absurd a law of evidence would, in the case supposed, be silenced at once and put utterly to shame; let us hope, in the name of common sense and candour,

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Fourth ob-
jection.
Fanciful
exaggera-
tion of
Episcopal
claims.

never more to hear insinuations that Athanasius or Augustin, Ambrose, Optatus, or even later writers, are incompetent to attest the Apostolical institution of the Episcopal order.

4. Another method by which it is very plausibly attempted to invalidate the authorities for Episcopacy is, to exaggerate the prerogatives laid claim to by the Episcopal order, and to allege that no church officer on Episcopalian principles is entitled to the name of Bishop, who does not appropriate to himself the whole government of the Church ; who does not exercise exclusively the power of granting ordination, and of enforcing discipline ; or who does not shut out his Presbyters from every share of authority. This expedient is attended with a twofold advantage. Not only does it afford opportunity for declaiming on the danger of prelatical oppression, prelatical cruelty, and prelatical tyranny ; but this expedient also opens a wide door for introducing many arguments from antiquity, which otherwise must be at once abandoned as untenable. The latter circumstance gives some importance to this ingenious mode of stating the question. For, if all power, according to the Episcopalian system, were necessarily confined to the Bishop ; if no ecclesiastical functionary, (however high the prerogatives ascribed to him by ancient writers,) could properly be styled a Bishop in our sense, unless he governed his diocese absolutely and independently, and without advice or assistance of any kind from his Presbyters : there would be

the greatest difficulty in proving that any Bishop, according to the acceptation attributed to us, ever had existence. It would follow that every passage in any Father of the Church which attributed a share of power, (however trifling or subordinate,) to the Presbyters, or which mentioned Presbyters as counsellors to the Bishop, would seem adverse to the Episcopalian cause. It would follow that no passage could be quoted in support of that cause, (however clearly the words of it described the Bishop as superior to his Presbyters,) unless it also spoke of him as a self-directed, self-counselled and autocratic ruler.

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The difficulty which would beset our argument, should we admit this clever misrepresentation, will become more apparent, if in illustration of it, we adduce, as before, a similar fallacy from ordinary circumstances in secular affairs and in modern life. Let some disputatious person contending against monarchy in England as a modern invention, be allowed to assume for his premises that on the supposition of a British King, as defined by royalists, he must be shown to exercise a power exclusive of every other order in the State: that if he can be proved from history to have an established council, consisting of his nobility, or his commons, associated with him in any department of the State, he ceases to be a King: and that no passages in the records of the constitution will prove his royal dignity, unless they invest him at the same time with despotic and all-absorbing sway.—These pre-

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mises granted, it must be obvious that the proof of the existence of monarchy would be encumbered by needless and almost insurmountable embarrassments. On these terms it would avail us nothing to demonstrate, from a thousand documents, that nobles, so far from being literally peers (*pares* or *joint monarchs*, if we may be permitted a strange expression to denote a preposterous idea) of the English realm, were from the beginning created by the reigning monarch himself, and without him could have no existence. It would be equally in vain for us to plead, that (in addition to creation of peers,) the sovereign performed all other acts, whether legislative or executive, which both in common speech, and in legal acceptance, comprise the regal office. It would be to no purpose, even if we enumerated from history the titles, honours, and emoluments, which this great person enjoyed, or the homage which he customarily received.

The reader may have anticipated that such a kind of statement, with a view to subvert the evidence for Episcopacy, would be equally unfounded. No intelligent Episcopalian claims for Bishops more than the superiority of their order, and a pre-eminent though not exclusive jurisdiction. No intelligent Episcopalian maintains that for a council of Presbyters to give advice in the administration of Church affairs, to examine candidates for ordination, and even to lay hands upon them in conjunction with the Bishop, are acts and privileges in any wise inconsistent with presbyterian subordi-

nation. On the contrary, every well informed Episcopalian is ready to admit, that Presbyters from the very first were admitted to these privileges. He is perfectly aware that Ignatius himself speaks of Presbyters “as counsellors and assistants to the Bishop” (σύμβουλοι καὶ συνεδρευταὶ τοῦ ἐπισκόπου¹) that even Cyprian describes the Presbyters at Carthage as “sitting with himself in council² :” and that neither Hooker, Bilson, Fields, Chillingworth, Stillingfleet, Thorndike, Hall, Barrow, Sherlock, nor any the most zealous defender of Episcopacy who has obtained celebrity, ever pleaded for a sole and exclusive jurisdiction³. They contend for nothing more than that Bishops possess the highest rank, and exercise superior authority ; and that Presbyters, without a Bishop, have not the right of conferring ordination. No advantage, therefore, is gained against us by the advocates of other forms of Church polity, when they adduce quotations from the Fathers ascribing some share of power to Presbyters, or representing Presbyters as counsellors to the Bishop : unless those quotations reduce the Bishop to a level with his Presbyters ; invest him with no higher office than that of a powerless moderator, or chairman in a Presbyterian synod ; and give explicit sanction to non-

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¹ Epist. ad Trall.

² Ego et compresbyteri nostri qui nobis adsidebant.—Cyp. Ep. 27.

³ For the authorities alluded to in the text, see note (L) at the end of the volume.

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Fifth objec-
tion. No
Popery nor
Prelacy.

episcopal ordination. No such quotations can be found.

5. But our dissenting fellow Protestants have another favourite topic, which savours more of declamation than of argument. The fearful cry of "No Popery" is raised against us. The people are instructed to believe, by the constant working of alliteration on their ears, and of repetition upon their minds, that popery and prelacy are one and the same thing: Bishops are represented as a kind of emissaries and precursors of the Roman Pontiff; and Episcopal jurisdiction, as a kind of fringe from the scarlet robe, that bedecked the mother of abominations¹.

To these flourishes of dissenting rhetoric, we may quietly reply, that nothing would more delight a Romanist, than to find this charge substantiated. He would feel that in his contest with his Protestant antagonist he had the vantage ground at once conceded. For if Episcopacy be a part of Romanism, inseparably connected with the rest of that system; and if, as dissenters themselves admit, Episcopacy was established about the year 140, then Romanism is proved far more ancient than Protestants can

¹ The same expedient was formerly employed to bring Presbytery into disrepute.—See Mr. John Spittlehouse's "Emblem of Antichrist in his threefold hierarchies of Papacy, Prelacy, and Presbyterie." Also another work, entitled "Rome Ruinated by Whitehall, or the Papal Crown Demolished; containing 'a confutation of the three degrees of Popery; namely, Papacy, Prelacy, and Presbyterie.'"

safely, or rationally allow. Instead of tracing Romanism at the furthest, as we do, to the fourth and fifth centuries: we must date it back to the middle of the second; to the very times which we account the best and purest ages of the Church. This indeed would be a papal triumph!

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But popery and prelacy, (to repeat the favourite alliteration of our dissenting brethren,) so far from being necessarily connected with one another, are diametrically opposed¹. Where prelacy exists, popery is not; where popery begins to flourish; prelacy must decline. No sooner was the supremacy of the Pope acknowledged than encroachments were

¹ The inveterate and senseless manner in which Popery has been imputed to the Church of England and her best Divines, has excited the indignant astonishment of the most zealous Protestants abroad. The great French Calvinist, M. Dailli, referring in one of his works to the cry of Popery raised against Bishop Cosins, observes with great warmth: "Those men are brutes, and real fanatics (*bestiæ sunt et quidem fanatici*) who suspect him of Popery, than whom you will scarce find any man less papally inclined."—(See Barbon on Liturgies, p. 170.) We may add that Dr. Cosins, Bishop of Durham, was author of the ablest work ever written against transubstantiation.

Archbishop Whitgift, describes very pointedly the beneficial effects to Popery from the Schismatic spirit prevailing in England, under pretence of defective reformation. "I know," says he, "that those sects and heresies gave strength unto Anti-Christ, and at length were one special means of placing him on his throne; even as also I am persuaded, that at this day he worketh as effectually by your stirs and contentions, whereby he hath, and will more prevail against the Church of England, than by any other means whatsoever."—*Ibid.* p. 159.

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made on Episcopal jurisdiction. Various districts and entire corporations of ecclesiastics were withdrawn from diocesan control. More power was given, in many instances, to mere Priests and Deacons, (under the name of Cardinals and Legates,) than to any Bishop but the Roman Pontiff. Inferior church officers, invested with uncanonical authority, were frequently empowered to suspend, and even to deprive their superiors. The Pope, it was affirmed, might grant commissions authorizing the lower ranks of the clergy to confer on others the order or degree held by themselves: so that a Priest was licensed to ordain Priests, and a Deacon to ordain Deacons; on which commissions we may make this passing remark, that they form the earliest and only precedent, before the days of protestantism, for presbyterian or deaconal ordination. In short, those unscrupulous supporters of the Papacy, the schoolmen and canonists of the middle ages, have, for opposite reasons, endeavoured, with unwearied perseverance, to exalt the Presbyter and to depreciate the Bishop. Of these two parties (whom we may denominate the anti-episcopalians of the Church of Rome) the former, that of the schoolmen, with a view of magnifying transubstantiation, extolled to such a height the priestly office by which that great performance was achieved; while the other party the Canonists (with the design of raising the Pope's authority,) depressed so low the Episcopal office, by which his power was chiefly limited; that the two offices, although originally

differing in rank, made a close approximation to equality. Hence the Papal faction in that celebrated Popish assembly, the council of Trent, regarded Episcopacy with considerable jealousy; and considered its establishment on the ground of apostolical institution or divine right, as among the heaviest blows that could be given to the pretensions of the Roman see ¹.

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6. Perhaps, however, the most popular and certainly the least argumentative of the means used to invalidate Episcopacy, is a practice frequent among an inferior class of writers; namely, to enlist under the anti-episcopalian banner, the envy, the covetousness, and baser passions of mankind, by enlarging

Sixth objection.
Wealth and secular powers of Bishops.

¹ Bishop Saunderson on this subject has these words: "It is very well known to many, what rejoicing that vote of the Long Parliament for pulling down Episcopacy, brought to the Romish Party: and how, even in Rome itself, they sang their *Io pæans* upon the tidings thereof, and said triumphantly: *Now the day is ours; now is the fatal blow given to the Protestant religion in England.*"—Preface to Bishop Saunderson's 14 Sermons, sect. 18.

Besides, says Joseph Mede, it is to be taken notice of (because of the prejudicate misprision of many to the contrary) that the measure of truth and falsehood, best and worst, is not the greater or lesser distance from Popery, (forasmuch as Popery also containeth much of Christianity,) nor that which is most destructive of the man of sin, always most warrantable and safe to be embraced. If it were, there be some in the world (whose religion we should be loath to admit of) that would be found more orthodox and better informed Christians than any of us all.—See Works of Joseph Mede, folio. See also Brett on Church Government, and Leslie on the Qualifications for Administering the Sacraments.

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upon the exorbitant wealth of the Episcopal order ; and by contrasting the poverty, the plainness, the humility of an Apostle or of a Bishop, in the first and second centuries, with the lordly grandeur of their successors in the present day, “ who are guilty of being nobles of the realm, who have a voice in the legislature, who live in palaces, who sit upon thrones, and whose income is the revenue of provinces :” and from this change of external circumstances it is pretended that the latter can make no pretensions to have inherited the office and prerogatives of the former ¹. This topic is well adapted to popular declamation, and obtains over weak and superficial minds a greater influence than more substantial objections. But the whole statement is irrelevant to the present question, and unworthy of a fair or candid disputant. For the question to be determined is, whether Presbyters possess by apostolical

¹ This argument, if argument we ought to call it, is of very ancient date. Barbon in his work before quoted, printed 1663, refers to a contemporary writer, who makes the following eloquent tirade:—“ Bishops, in former times, did not call themselves lords, they were not ordained by Archbishops; they had no stately palaces, they had no such officers under them as Deans; they held no country courts; they did not wear scarlet gowns, mitres, and lawn sleeves, &c.” To each of these grave charges Barbon gives a specific reply—pp. 177—188.

“ If mitres offend him,” says Archbishop Secker, in his reply to Mayhew, “ our Bishops wear none ; if they are styled lords, it is because by the ancient constitution of our country, they sit in the upper house of Parliament, where, I believe, they are thought as useful as the rest.”—p. 243.

appointment an exclusive and independent power of conferring ordination, and of exercising ecclesiastical jurisdiction; or whether those powers do not belong principally and essentially to a superior order of church officers: and the answer proposed to be returned is, that those superior church officers are now endowed with large incomes, and lordly titles; and that on this account Presbyters have acquired the right, exclusively and independently, of governing and ordaining. A greater solecism in argument never was committed. Imagine some Jewish Priest, in the days of David or of Solomon, to have pretended that the High Priests of those times, (when the monarchy of Israel was in all its glory,) were incomparably richer and greater persons than the primitive High Priests in days of purity, while the ten tribes were wandering in the desert, or were maintaining a hard conflict with the Canaanites for the possession of the Holy Land; imagine this Levitical objector to affirm that he could not recognize the humility, the simplicity, the poverty of Aaron or of Eleazar, in the magnificent Abiathar or the lordly Zadoc, and, therefore, that he himself, though an inferior minister, was entitled to assume the functions of his superior, and might enter without scruple into the most holy place with the blood of the appointed victim on the day of expiation:—is it likely such a claim would have been tolerated? Would not the most ignorant of the people have perceived at once that the mere accidental circumstance of greater wealth or splen-

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dour in the officer, made no difference in the essential character of the office? that the High Priest, was High Priest, whether in penury or in grandeur; in a hovel, or in a palace; and that the intrusion of inferior Priests into the office of their superior was equally unwarranted, whatever might be his temporal condition, while his spiritual rights remained the same?

Or to suppose another case more familiar to many readers: let a controversy be raised on the subject of royal power: would the circumstance be regarded for one moment as a valid objection against royalty, that the King of England, in the present day, is beyond comparison a richer and more potent prince than the Alfreds, the Henries, or the Edwards of former times? that his revenues are increased a hundred-fold beyond the revenues of those princes whom he claims to represent: that innumerable islands, provinces and kingdoms, are now subject to his sway; that his very viceroys live in greater splendour than the proudest of his predecessors; that the sun never sets on his dominions; and that therefore, though his ancestors were lawful princes, he himself is an usurper, and his title a mere delusion? Would not the meanest understanding perceive the obvious distinction between the real nature of sovereignty and its accidental properties; and confess that ancient and present royalty are the same in substance, whatever outward dissimilarities may be traced between them?

Or again, to choose another instance which may

come home to every impartial Christian : let some infidel allege that the Church of Christ in the present day is not the same Church as in former times : let him argue that a small company of one hundred and twenty obscure persons assembled in “ an upper room ” at Jerusalem, is a wholly different thing from a society, great, learned, powerful and innumerable, reckoning among its members kings and nobles, statesmen and philosophers, and founding throughout every quarter of the globe churches and missions, and colleges to promote its principles ? Could the fallacy of such an argument remain concealed from any man acquainted with the Christian religion ?

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But if our dissenting brethren, refusing to allow a prelate of this country to be a genuine successor of the Apostles, are prevented only by the wealth and honours with which he is endowed, they must consistently admit a poor, untitled, and unendowed Episcopacy to be truly apostolical. They must of course allow that Bishops, entirely destitute of temporal aggrandizement, are not unworthy representatives of St. Peter and St. Paul : they must hold such Bishops to be Bishops by divine right, and to possess indefeasibly a spiritual pre-eminence. Now the rulers of the Episcopal Churches in Scotland and in America are exactly Bishops of this kind. They are not peers of the realm ; they have no voice in Parliament or Congress ; they do not live in palaces ; they do not sit on thrones ; their incomes are not the revenues of whole provinces ; in short,

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the disqualifying circumstances of rank and fortune are in their case entirely wanting: their poverty and humility of condition are completely Apostolical. Do our dissenting brethren then acknowledge the pretensions of these unennobled pastors? Do they concede that Episcopacy in Scotland and America, though not in England, is by divine right? Do they permit the honours of Episcopacy to a Bishop at Eugubium and refuse them to one at Rome¹? Do they grant the same submission to be rightfully claimed by the Bishop unendowed and unrecognized by the state, which they refuse to the Prelate or Metropolitan? Far from it: their hostility is directed absolutely and altogether against the order under any circumstances whatsoever. They no more recognise the spiritual claims of the poorest Bishop in the north, than of the wealthiest Primate in the south. They equally deny obedience to be due from Presbyters to the simple Doctor as to the mitred noble. Consequently the mere circumstance of Episcopal wealth and power is not the true reason why they cannot see in the Prelates of this country the representatives of the Apostles.

Early origin
of Church
Endow-
ments.

It may here be interesting to remark, that the

¹ *Ubi cumque fuerit episcopus, sive Romæ, sive Eugubii, sive Constantinopoli, sive Regii, sive Alexandriæ, sive Tanis, ejusdem meriti est et ejusdem sacerdotii: potentia divitiarum, et paupertatis humilitas vel sublimiorem vel inferiorem episcopum non facit. Cæterum omnes Apostolorum successores sunt.*—Hieron. Epist. ad Evag.

endowments attached to Churches, and the distinctions bestowed on Church officers, are much more ancient than is generally supposed. The settlement of lands and houses upon ecclesiastical bodies is commonly regarded as of later date than even the political establishment of Christianity in the reign of Constantine : and the Apostolic poverty and purity of the Church antecedent to that late period, has often been the theme of dissenting panegyric. Yet at the very beginning of the third century, we find from public records that landed property, even within the limits of Rome itself, was attached to certain Christian Churches. Before the close of that century not only the church of Rome, but also those of Milan, Carthage, Antioch, and Alexandria, are described to have been opulently endowed ¹. A decree was passed by Constantine in the early part of his career, and while he only shared (with Licinius) the imperial dignity, (A.D. 303.) that the gardens, lands, and other possessions, which had previously belonged to the Church, and which had been confiscated in time of persecution, should be restored. And St. Chrysostom, raised to the Patriarchal see of Constantinople, reproachfully contrasts the poverty of that Church, in his time, with its wealth and prosperous state in preceding ages ².

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¹ See Gibbon, Decline and Fall.

² The Fathers of the primitive Church, long before St. Chrysostom, are urgent and authoritative in their demands of liberal support from Christian people to their Pastors. Those econo-

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Titles.

The appropriation also of peculiar titles to the highest order of Church officers is of very remote antiquity. Without inquiring into the necessity, or even vindicating the propriety, of all the titles

mists who retain their attachment to religion and Christian institutions, yet conceive the Church to hold, in modern times, more than a fair proportion of the national wealth, will read with surprise the following remarks of Origen. Commenting on the 18th chapter of Numbers, where the Jews are required to offer to God their first fruits, for the use and by the mediation of the Priests, Origen has these words: "No man can lawfully use the fruits of the earth, or of the cattle, till he has offered the first fruits of them all to God, that is, to the Priests. This law, I think, ought now to be observed according to the letter." Afterwards he proceeds thus: "Our Lord said in the Gospel, 'Woe unto you Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, who tithe mint, cummin, and anise, and pass by the weightier matters of the law: ye hypocrites, these ought to have been done, and not to leave the other undone.' Observe diligently, how our Lord prescribes the doing of the weightier things of the law, and also will not allow the literal performance of the other things here mentioned, to be omitted. But if you say, that he spoke this to the Pharisees, and not to his disciples, hear again what he says to his disciples: 'Except your righteousness *exceed* the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.' What therefore he prescribes to be done by the Pharisees, he would have fulfilled by his own disciples *much more abundantly*. How then does my righteousness exceed theirs, if they dare not taste the fruits of the earth, till they have offered the first fruits of them to the Priests, and the tithes to the Levites; and I, doing neither of these, apply the first fruits of the earth to my own use, without acquainting Priest, or Levite, or imparting any share of them to the Altar?" Hence he concludes, "That the precept concerning first fruits stands in force according to the letter."—Homil. xi. in Num.

actually bestowed (some of which, as being of an oriental and Asiatic character, have been in later times exchanged for the more simple diction of European nations,) it is remarkable how very soon expressions of profound respect, not only for the governors of the Church, but for every circumstance connected with them, were adopted into general usage. The practice so unpopular with dissenters of calling the Bishop's seat in his cathedral a *throne* is of primitive origin. The chair of the Bishop of Jerusalem is stated to have been called his Apostolic throne, because St. James, the kinsman of our Lord, was its first occupant. The seat of the Bishop of Alexandria was, on the same principle, styled the throne of St. Mark, because that Evangelist was the first Bishop of the See. An ornament on the head (*petalum*) corresponding perhaps to the mitre, though now disused by our Church, is mentioned by writers in the fourth century to have been worn by Bishops of preceding ages. And in the second and third centuries, Bishops themselves not only were addressed in forms of respectful salutation, but were dignified with higher titles than the greatest metropolitan in the present day would feel warranted in receiving. They are styled "Heads and princes of the people," (*apices et principes omnium*,) princes of the Clergy, (*principes sacerdotum*,) Chief Priests, (*summi sacerdotes*,) supreme Pontiffs, (*pontifices maximi*,) Vicars of Christ, (*vice Christi*,) Popes, (*Papæ*,) blessed Popes, (*Papæ benedicti*,) and most glorious Popes, (*Papæ*

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Seventh ob-
jection.
Aerius an
ancient
anti-Epis-
copalian.

gloriosissimi.)¹ The very title most obnoxious to our dissenting brethren—that of lords (or *δισποίται*) was the ordinary Episcopal appellation in the days of Athanasius and of Augustin².

7. The only argument from antiquity, (perhaps the fairest argument which the anti-episcopalian advocate can produce,) is derived from the opinion of the heretic Aerius. This person was the first and only real opponent of Episcopacy in the ancient Church³. He flourished about the middle of the fourth century. The occasion of his heresy was his envy of Eustathius, who though of equal age, and of the same qualifications, was preferred before him

¹ This last title is given by the Presbyters of Rome, to Cyprian, Bishop of Carthage. The title of Pope or "Father" was not then confined to the Bishop of Rome. It was for a long time after the common designation of Bishops.

² Letters of that ancient date are still quoted: as for example, from the Bishops of the second general council to "the most honourable Lords Damasus, Ambrose," &c.: from my Lord Eusebius, Bishop of Cæsarea, to my Lord Paulinus, Bishop of Tyre: and from the Synod of Jerusalem, congratulating the Clergy of Egypt, and of Lybia, on the restoration of their Lord Bishop Athanasius from exile. Calvin addresses his friend Cramer by his usual titles—*Reverende domine*, Reverend Lord, &c. Similar letters may be consulted from Peter Martyr, from Gaultier, Beza, and Sadeel, in the name of the Church of Geneva. See Durel, Bingham, and Hicks, (p. 251.) on the Priesthood.

³ Tertullian mentions certain heretics in his time, who disregarded Bishops, but who disregarded at the same time the essential doctrines of Christianity, and believed, with the Heathens, in a plurality of gods. The opinion of such sectaries is unworthy of attention.—Tertull. de præscrip. Heret. cap. 42.

to the Bishopric of Sebastia, in Pontus, for which both were candidates. No concessions on the part of his successful rival, (who regretted the mortification which he had innocently caused,) could appease the resentment of Acrius. The latter proceeded to calumniate Eustathius ; to designate the new prelate as proud, overbearing, and avaricious ; to withdraw himself from the communion of the Church ; and to publish a variety of heretical opinions, more especially, the opinion that he himself, though a Presbyter, was of equal honor and dignity with Eustathius, and that by the word of God no difference was recognized between Presbyters and their Bishop. No circumstance gives importance to the opinion of this obscure Presbyter, but that he is the only individual among all the ancients, who really gives support to the anti-episcopalian, or, as it has been called from him, the *Acrian* cause. But after all, on examination, that support seems extremely feeble and insignificant. He is, as already noticed, a very late authority, for he did not publish his novelties till about the middle of the fourth century : his mind was warped by motives of private interest and resentment : he quotes no preceding authority for his errors : besides that he neither claimed nor exercised the power of ordination, which is the principal and peculiar prerogative of Episcopacy ; his notions were condemned as strange and heretical by the universal Church, and speedily died away¹.

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¹ An able and satisfactory reply to Acrius was published by

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Eighth ob-
jection.
Prime
Presbyters.

The use which has been made of this solitary testimony, conveys the insinuation that Aerius, a single Presbyter, was the only individual out of all antiquity who understood the Apostolical constitution of the Church.

8. Another plausible contrivance of the modern followers of Aerius, is their invention of a new character, a Prime Presbyter, whom they allege to have presided in the colleges of Presbyters, and whom they fancy to be alluded to in all passages of the Fathers that relate to the prerogatives of Bishops. This poetic personage, this creature of the dissenting imagination, was created by David Blondel, a very learned and ingenious Frenchman, employed by the assembly of divines at Westminster, to write a book in support of Presbyterianism, when they found themselves hard pressed by the advocates of Episcopacy. Their Gallican auxiliary, however, was less favourable to the views of the assembly than they expected. For though he wrote a heavy, closely printed quarto in Latin, full of curious research upon the whole, in favour of the Aerian cause, he repeatedly expressed his respect and even reverence for Episcopalian principles, both in the preface and in the body of the work; and

his cotemporary Epiphanius, Bishop of Salamis, in Cyprus, a friend of St. Jerome. We might have added Epiphanius, in our second chapter, to the number of authorities in favour of Episcopacy. The Cyprian Bishop is very severe on Aerius, and calls his notion *ἁφροσύνης ἐμπλέων* and *μανιώδης μάλλον ἢ περ καταστάσεως ἀνθρωπίνης*, a perversion of mind out of the ordinary course of human nature. Advers. Hæres. lxxv. p. 906.

entered this solemn protest to the same effect at the conclusion : “ By all that we have said in asserting the rights of the Presbyters, we do not intend to invalidate the ancient and apostolical constitution of Episcopal pre-eminence ; but we believe that wheresoever it is established conformably to the ancient canons, it must be reverently preserved ; and wheresoever, by some heat of contention or otherwise, it has been put down, it ought to be reverently restored ¹. ” Blondel was persuaded to cancel this passage, and the figment of a Prime Presbyter, a thing never before heard of, has ever since been found of great advantage to the propagation of dissenting tenets. The shadowy and indefinite form of this ideal personage, enables the disseminators of schism to assign him whatever attributes, and whatever properties are most convenient to their purpose ; and the more they find themselves hard pressed by the arguments of the defenders of Apostolic discipline within the Church, the more nearly do they mould the resemblance between a Prime Presbyter and a Bishop, till hardly any difference at last can be perceived between them. When the controversy begins, this Prime Presbyter is only an occasional moderator of the Presbytery ; as the argument proceeds, he is made to hold the moderatorship for life ; then the rights

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¹ The curious circumstances attending the omission of this protest, are explained in a letter by Dr. Peter du Moulin, Prebendary of Canterbury, published by Dr. Durel, and will be found in note (M) at the end of the volume.

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of jurisdiction and coercion are liberally assigned him; and at last the power of ordination cannot be exercised without him. Here then, we can only say, that we attach no value to mere words. If the dissenter will allow his moderator to be invested with Episcopal authority, we are entirely satisfied. "Let us then," to quote the words of Leslie, "have a moderator, like the Bishops, in the writings of the Fathers, namely, a moderator as a standing officer, during life, to whom all the Presbyters are to be obedient, as to Christ, that is to the moderator as representing the person of Christ; that nothing be done without him: that he be understood as the principle of unity in his Church, so that they who unjustly break off from his communion are thereby a schism: that he show his succession by regular ordination conveyed down from the Apostles; in short, that he have all that character and authority which we see to have been recognized in the Bishops in the very age of the Apostles, and all the succeeding ages of Christianity: and then call him moderator, superintendent, or bishop; for the contest is not about the name, but the thing¹."

¹ See Leslie's works, folio. vol. ii. p. 754. and for an analysis of Blondel's scheme, together with some observations on that of Salmasius, see note (N) at the end of the volume.

We may here revert to what was said respecting *omissions*, and observe, that if such omissions are adverse to the existence of a Bishop, they are no less adverse to the existence of a Prime Presbyter. We may ask with Bishop Hoadley, Why does not

9. We have already noticed that the only authority really anti-episcopalian which is mentioned in ancient writers, is Acrius. But we may now state that there is another presumed authority, that of the Presbyter St. Jerome, who is mistakenly represented as tracing the origin of Episcopal primacy to a more recent period than the Apostolic age. The circumstances which led this Father to use language capable of this misconstruction may be briefly stated. He was irritated at the presumption of certain Deacons, who happening to enjoy wealthier Church endowments than their ecclesiastical superiors or Presbyters, insisted on peculiar privileges incompatible with subordination; and showed their contempt of the presbyterian order, by refusing to be promoted into it. This irregularity so roused the spirit of St. Jerome, naturally irritable, that he not only took every means possible to raise his own presbyterian order above the diaconal, but used language which seemed to place it, at its original institution, on a level with the Episcopal and even the Apostolic dignity. We find him adverting to this topic in two passages of his works; namely, in his letter to Evagrius, and in a commentary on the first chapter of St. Paul's epistle to Titus. Having observed the titles Bishop and Presbyter to be used in Scripture interchangeably, and that even the Apostles style themselves

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Ninth objection. St. Jerome a presumed anti-episcopalian.

St. Clement, on the supposition that he gives a full enumeration of ecclesiastical dignitaries, leave out the Prime Presbyter?

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Presbyters, he appears to imply that no distinction at first existed between these offices, but that Apostle, Bishop, and Presbyter, were only different names for one and the same officer¹. He thus proceeds: "Before the time came when divisions in religion by the instigation of the Devil began, and cries were raised among the people, 'I am of Paul: I am of Apollos: and I of Cephas; the Churches were governed by a joint council of Presbyters. But afterwards, (when each Presbyter considered those disciples whom he had baptized to be his own, and not Christ's,) *it was decreed over all the world*, that one Presbyter chosen from his brethren should be appointed over the rest, on whom the whole management of the Church should devolve; and by these means the seeds of schism be removed²."

The inestimable value which is attached by our dissenting brethren to the above quotation would be very difficult to be explained, did we not reflect that authorities are sometimes precious in proportion to the scantiness of their number. Not only are these words of St. Jerome preferred before other contrary expressions in his own writings, and

¹ Idem est ergo Presbyter qui et Episcopus.

² Antequam Diaboli instinctu studia in religione fierent, et diceretur in populis, ego sum Pauli, ego Apollinis, ego autem Cephæ; communi presbyterorum consilio ecclesiæ gubernabantur. Postquam vero unusquisque eos quos baptizaverat suos putabat esse non Christi, in toto orbe decretum est, ut unus de presbyteris electus superponeretur cæteris ad quem omnis ecclesiæ cura pertineret et schismatum semina tollerentur. Hieron. comm. in Tit. cap. i.

in those of Epiphanius, Ambrose and Augustin, his friends and contemporaries, but even to the plainest assertions of writers at a period far earlier, with much better means of information : we allude to Cyprian, Origen, Irenæus, and Tertullian, all of them above a century before St. Jerome. From the confidence with which the passage now before us is appealed to as a kind of oracular response that is to silence every further inquiry, a plain person, uninvolved in the controversy, might almost imagine that this golden passage was not a comment merely, but an actual text of Holy Scripture.

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The adversaries then of Episcopacy, relying on the *decree over all the world* spoken of by St. Jerome in the manner we have quoted, pretend to trace the rise of the distinction between Presbyters and Bishops to a later period than the Apostolic age. They conjecture the decree in question to have been promulgated, A.D. 140. A later date would bring the anti-episcopal chronologist into perilous collision with that phalanx of witnesses on our side, who, towards the close of the second century, decidedly affirm the existence of an Episcopal order, contemporary with themselves, and invested with peculiar rights and prerogatives. An earlier date would, on the other hand, be still more inconvenient and fatal to the anti-episcopalian : it would carry back the ecclesiastical revolution implied by this decree to the very times of the Apostles. Hence, for the epoch of its promulgation, the year 140 has been, not injudiciously, selected.

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We are given, therefore, to understand, according to the above hypothesis, that the whole order of Presbyters throughout Christendom (*toto orbe*), sensible of the factious spirit engendered by Presbyterian equality, resolved, for the sake of peace, to surrender up their most important privileges into the hands of a new functionary, on whom from thenceforward the right of granting ordination and of exercising spiritual jurisdiction should especially devolve. We must imagine that those writers, (who lived before this self-denying act, and who mention Bishops as existing in the previous age, and as invested with peculiar powers,) have described to us this form of polity, from fancy rather than experience; since the new constitution was not contrived, till after they were in their graves! We must suppose that all the learned and voluminous writers of the same early period, as well as those of later ages, have passed over this decree in studied silence; and that such of them as were Bishops have boldly claimed predecessors in the newly-devised Episcopate, and even traced those predecessors to the ordination of the Apostles, knowing all the while, that, till the year 140, Episcopacy did not exist; and knowing also that this was known to the *whole world*. We must believe that this extraordinary decretal, this act of unexampled meekness and humility, was silently concurred in by all the Presbyters throughout Europe, Africa, and Asia: although the jealousy, factiousness and ambition of those same Presbyters, were the very evils to be

remedied by the decree ; and although there was neither general council to enact it, nor prince nor prelate to enforce it ! We must persuade ourselves, that in times of fierce and cruel persecution, (when the most distinguished officers in the Church were selected for victims,) persons could every where be found so blindly ambitious as to assume a power and pre-eminence above their brethren, to which they were not entitled, and by which they peculiarly exposed themselves, without the least temptation of secular advantage, to the fury of the common enemy. We must imagine that on this point heretics concurred unanimously with their orthodox opponents, consenting never to reproach them for the unauthorized innovation, and even suffering themselves to be taunted with their want of episcopal succession ; though they knew all the while that every claim to that succession was utterly delusive, and that the succession no where had existence ! Lastly, we must, on the foregoing hypothesis, take for granted that this important, this fundamental, this very sudden change in the constitution of the church, was effected at a period when Christians throughout the world were sensitively jealous on the subject of ancient usage ; when they regarded the least infringement on Apostolic practice as a crime ; and when they even excommunicated one another on a question so insignificant as the day appointed by the Apostles for the celebration of Easter !

The historical view of Church polity ascribed to

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St. Jerome, were the objections fewer than we have stated, would not be credible on his authority. Jerome was not born till the middle of the fourth century. He quotes no previous writer as concurring in his opinion : and he himself elsewhere positively contradicts it, by describing the Apostles as the introducers of the threefold distinction among Christian ministers, in imitation of the Mosaic system ; by calling Bishops the sons or successors of the Apostles ; by giving catalogues of Bishops superintending various churches, not only to the year 140, but to the Apostolic age itself ; and by explicitly denying that Presbyters possessed the right of ordination, which belonged exclusively to the Episcopal order.

But after all, on examining the words of St. Jerome, we find them altogether unsusceptible of the construction which the advocates of Presbyterian primacy would attach to them : we find them quite inapplicable to the supposed universal agreement among Presbyters to institute the Episcopal order, towards the middle of the second century. St. Jerome mentions a *decree* : he refers to no *mutual agreement* : his very word decree, presupposes necessarily the interposition of authority ; and he dates this decree from the period when “ cries were raised among the people : *I am of Paul, and I am of Apollos, and I of Cephas*, and when each Presbyter considered those disciples whom he baptized to be his own and not Christ’s.” This period, as St. Paul himself assures us, was in his own life-

time ¹, and therefore this decree was an Apostolical institution ; a fact to which St. Jerome himself elsewhere testifies, when he declares that St. James, soon after the ascension of our Lord, was appointed by the Apostles Bishop of Jerusalem, Timothy Bishop of Ephesus, Titus Bishop of Crete, and Polycarp Bishop of Smyrna. Nor will it avail to say that St. Jerome here refers to a congregational and not to a diocesan Episcopacy ; for Timothy and Titus, as we learn from Scripture, were not merely pastors of congregations, but inspectors and overseers of the clergy. In short, the case which this illustrious Father describes is plainly what we stated at the beginning of this essay, namely, that in the absence of the Apostles, Presbyters originally were the highest local authorities in the Church : but since a form of government so constituted occasioned inconvenience and gave rise to parties and divisions, the Apostles deputed other superior officers, such as Timothy and Titus, whom they invested with their own authority, to quell the spirit of faction by a more constant exercise of Apostolic power. This celebrated passage therefore only

¹ " Now this I say, that every one of you saith I am of Paul, and I of Apollos, and I of Cephas, and I of Christ. Is Christ divided ? Was Paul crucified for you ? or *were ye baptized in the name of Paul ?* I thank God, that I baptized none of you but Crispus and Gaius : lest any should say that *I baptized in mine own name.* And I baptized also the household of Stephanus ; besides I know not whether I baptized any other." 1 Cor. i. 12—17.

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Summary
of preceding
arguments.

goes to prove, by the unsuspected authority of St. Jerome, that what was done in the case of Ephesus and of Crete, was not a partial measure, limited to those particular churches, but was spread abroad by a general “decree over the whole world.”

We may now express a hope that we have brought to a satisfactory conclusion our inquiries on this important and comprehensive subject; that we have adduced sufficient arguments in favour of Episcopal Church polity; and have given sufficient answers to such objections as, with any plausibility, have been alleged against it. We have traced the growth of the ecclesiastical constitution planted by the Apostles through three successive appointments of Church officers, Deacons, Presbyters, and Bishops; each order invested with distinct functions and privileges. We have seen that Presbyters have no authority from Scripture to ordain, but that all precepts on this subject are addressed to persons of Episcopal rank; and that no authority can be found in the word of God for Presbyterian ordination. We have brought forward Timothy, invested by St. Paul with Apostolic powers over the Presbyters of Ephesus; and Titus over those of Crete. We have remarked St. James, the kinsman of our Lord, fixed, by Apostolical nomination, in the diocese of Jerusalem, and exerting on that account peculiar influence in the affairs of the Church. We have referred to Epistles addressed in the Apocalypse by our Saviour himself, through St. John, to the governors of the Seven Churches of Asia, designat-

ing them as Angels ; attributing to them powers of coercion and jurisdiction, eminently and peculiarly *Episcopal* ; applauding some of them for the vigorous exertion of those powers, and reproving others for supineness or neglect. When, from the works of the Apostles, we proceeded onward to the writings of their immediate successors, we found the Apostolical institution of Episcopacy recognized and affirmed distinctly, fully, universally. We showed the same assertions in later ages concerning the Apostolic origin of Episcopacy, to be uniformly repeated without contradiction or hesitation, by a series of writers in every quarter of the ancient world ; and not only to be persevered in by Catholics, but admitted also by Heretics. On the other hand, when we turned to the objections alleged by our own dissenting brethren, we found them resting upon erroneous assumptions, groundless suppositions or inventions, and misapplied quotations : on the unwarranted imposition of a modern sense upon ancient words ; on the post dating of ancient testimonies ; on the excitement of unfounded prejudices and apprehensions ; and what is worst of all, on the establishment of principles which would destroy the credit of all antiquity, and invalidate all ancient and external evidence, to the integrity of the sacred canon. Lastly, we have demonstrated that Episcopacy, as an Apostolical institution, continued universally throughout the world to be the form of Church polity during fifteen hundred years : and that those reformers

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Object of
 this work
 defensive.

who first established another system, took that measure with reluctance ; urged necessity alone as their excuse for the innovation ; and expressed, in the strongest terms, their profound reverence for the ancient Ecclesiastical constitution.

The preceding arguments are advanced with no design of excluding from the Church of Christ those Christian societies, whose forms of discipline are less agreeable to Apostolic rule than our own. My object is defence, rather than aggression. I would rather, with the judicious Hooker, “lament than exaggerate” the defects and imperfections inherent in other systems. I am eager to acknowledge, with that great man, the difference between matters of “perpetual necessity to all men’s salvation, and matters of ecclesiastical polity.” And I should be the last person to withhold the acknowledgment of my profound respect for the learning as well as piety of various ministers in establishments differing with respect to polity from the Church of England. At the same time I feel entitled to express my full conviction that no model of Church government devised by mere human wisdom, and grounded on departure from Divine institutions, can be so conducive to edification,—so agreeable to the mind of Christ,—so pure a channel for the communication of the Holy Spirit,—so effectual for the diffusion of sound religious principles throughout the world—in short, so effectually adapted in all respects to promote the glory of God and the salvation of man, as the Episcopal form ; a form which, to repeat the

acknowledgment of Calvin, "God himself has prescribed in his own word."

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It is principally on the ground of consonance with the Divine will, as collected from Scripture and antiquity, that the religious establishment of this country claims the reverence and attachment of the English nation. There are indeed other numerous advantages which might, with great force of argument, be alleged in favour of our Church; advantages moral, social, and political, both to the members of the Church themselves and to those who have withdrawn from her communion. If no means were left us of ascertaining the original formation of the Christian community; if that important question were buried for ever in the impenetrable silence and darkness of distant ages; if no motives of love and gratitude for the mercies, or of reverence for the authority of Christ, could be urged in favour of Episcopacy, in preference to independency or presbyterianism,—what is the plan of government which every right-minded Christian would desire to see established or retained? Would he not prefer the system under which the great body of Christians in all ages have lived and died, and under which Christianity itself was introduced into our own land?—the system which would best accord with our political institutions; which would uphold with most enlarged benevolence the principles of toleration; and which would bring religion most fully into influential contact with all classes?—the system which would best secure sta-

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bility to the Christian faith, and call forth in its support the ablest defenders against impiety and infidelity on the one hand, and on the other against fanaticism and superstition. And are not all these grounds of preference united in favour of Episcopacy, and in favour of Episcopacy alone? The whole Christian Church throughout the world, during the lapse of fifteen centuries, was constructed on this Divine model; and by the far greater proportion the same Divine model is still preserved. If we die in the Episcopal communion, we die in communion with all the saints and martyrs of antiquity, and with the wisest and holiest of succeeding Christians. It was from the lamp of Episcopacy that the light of true religion, dawning upon the ancient Britons, first dispelled the heathen darkness of this distant island: and when Saxon barbarism had extinguished that blessed illumination, it was under the same fostering auspices of Episcopacy that the light revived and was rekindled¹.

¹ "Car soit qu'il se soit porté (le Christianisme) en Angleterre par Joseph d'Arimathée, ou par Simon Canneus, ou par Luc disciple de Philippe, ou par Phaganus et Perusianus, du temps du Roy Lucius, il est constant que ce fut par le ministère des Eveques; et que c'est à leur charité, à leur zèle, et à leur suffisance, qu'ils sont redevables de la connoissance qu'ils possèdent presentement. Et comment donc s'emporter contre ce gouvernement? Et quelle folie de croire qu'ils pourront utilement secouer un gouvernement qui, l'espace de tant de siècles, a obtenu au milieu de leur église? Faut-il pas être bien brouillon pour se résoudre à ces extremités, et n'avoir guère d'expérience, et ne

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Ages of experience have proved to Englishmen that the Episcopal form of polity is peculiarly adapted to their political institutions ; upholding at once the dignity of the crown, the rights of the nobility, and the liberties of the people. Under the Episcopal jurisdiction, properly maintained and applied, the principles of toleration have been earlier introduced, more fully recognized, and more systematically acted upon in this country, than in any other country upon earth. Religion, too, is practically brought home to all classes of society : and while the humbler ranks of ministers, in the remotest corners of the kingdom, instruct the children of obscurity, of poverty, and ignorance, in the doctrines and duties of Christianity, and reconcile them to the inevitable sorrows and privations of their lot in this life, by the glorious prospect of a life to come in the eternal presence of their God ;—the highest order of Church officers, (invested with peculiar dignities and privileges, and admitted to familiar intercourse in courts and palaces,) are prepared to communicate a tone of religious feeling to influential members of the community, and have daily opportunities to become examples of true piety, and enlightened charity to our nobles and to our princes. Following the banners of Protestant Episcopacy, the soldiers of Christ and champions of the Faith in this favoured land have resisted those

sçavoir pas que les changements sont de dangereuse conséquence."

Letter of M. le Moyne to Dr. Brevint, A.D. 1661. quoted by Dr. Durel in his " View of the Reformed Churches." p. 133.

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assaults which in other countries have proved either death blows to true religion, or fatal to its welfare : and while the emissaries of Satan have insinuated themselves by secret wiles, or have marched in open triumph over the continent of Europe ; the shores of Britain have presented an adamantine barrier against the infidel assailant. And to whom are we indebted for maintaining these defences of our faith ? What church, what establishment in any other nation of Christendom, has supplied champions of the cross comparable to our own ? Have all the Presbyters, of all other Christian communities united, done more for the vindication of sound doctrine than the Bishops of the Church of England ? Some teachers at home may have zeal and piety ; others abroad may have ability and learning : but in what other body of religious instructors shall we find the same zeal, the same piety, the same learning, and ability combined ? In the conflict of the True Faith with Scepticism, Socinianism, and Romanism, to whose talents and energies do we owe, under Providence, our victory ? On whom do we rely with greater confidence than on Butler, Stillingfleet, Bramhall, Warburton, Sherlock, and Watson : on Bull, Horsley, and Magee : on Ridley, Jewell, Tillotson, and Taylor ? And in addition to these ornaments of their Episcopal order, are not Latimer and Hall ; Beveridge, Hopkins, and Sanderson ; Porteus, Wilson, and Horne, superior to any safeguards that can be named against the licentious invader of moral prin-

ciple? Can any uninspired compositions be produced, breathing more celestial strains of piety, or warmer sentiments of charity, a purer faith or a better founded hope, than the writings of those holy men, and Apostolic prelates?

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But defects, it is alleged, have been discovered in our Ecclesiastical institutions; grievous defects, arising from their connexion with the civil power. Time has engendered corruption. Pluralities exist; non-residence is tolerated; revenues are unequally distributed; canons imperfectly obeyed; and discipline partially enforced. The remedy for these evils has been called for, but has not been applied at all, or not with sufficient vigour.

Defects not essentially connected with Episcopacy.

These are complaints to which the peculiar circumstances of the times tend to give peculiar point and importance. With such as raise these complaints from hostility to the Christian religion, we have here no concern. We can only recommend them to read the evidences of Christianity, and warn them that in assailing the Church from anti-christian views, they may be found "haply to fight against God." To such on the contrary, as put forth these murmurs from no enmity to the Christian faith, but from a sincere desire of removing abuses, and of reviving salutary discipline, we reply,—beware of counteracting by rashness and impatience your own views. The objects at which you aim are legitimate, are honourable, and desirable, provided only that they are pursued judiciously, cautiously, safely. In all your plans of

Proper kind of remedy.

DISS. I.
CHAP. III.

reform pay due attention to *justice* ; and suffer no dishonest tampering with vested rights. Maintain the interests of *learning* as well as *piety* : while you provide parochial instruction for the people, provide also against attacks from the infidel, by preserving venerable institutions, which supply, (and have supplied for ages,) the means and the leisure for that important purpose ; and which, if once destroyed, you can never afterwards replace : suffer not the peculiar efficiency of our Church, as the safeguard, throughout the British empire, (or we may even say throughout the world,) of pure and sound religion against neology, scepticism, superstition, and fanatic wildness, to be lessened or impaired. Let some regard be paid to *things established*, merely as establishments ; and adopt no change merely for the sake of change : never innovate solely with a view to theoretic beauty and systematical proportion, but only from a clear perception of some actual wrong to be redressed, some positive evil to be remedied, some specific and unquestionable grievance to be removed : and in every act of interference for Church reform, be quite sure that the remedy you propose shall not involve a greater mischief than the disease. Let the *stability* of an Apostolical Church be conscientiously regarded and maintained ; and let not the permanent influence of sound religion upon a whole nation, be shaken—either to promote the temporary interests of any one political party, or (through abject fear of a licentious press,) to indulge a fickle, reckless multitude, in any

idle fancy of the day. Above all, let an ecclesiastical constitution of primitive and inspired appointments be religiously supported : let no reform be thought of which would remodel without restoring this ancient edifice : let no departure be attempted from the original polity of the Church ;—a polity established by Divine authority, and for fifteen centuries continued uninterruptedly throughout Christendom.

DISS. I.

CHAP. III.

DISSERTATION II.

ON LITURGIES.

“For so much as concerneth the form of prayers and ecclesiastical rites, I much approve, that it be determined so that it may not be lawful for the ministers in their administration to vary from it: as well to help the simplicity and unskilfulness of some, as that the uniformity of all the several congregations may better appear; and, finally, that the desultory and capricious lightness of such as affect novelties may be encountered and stopped¹.”—*Calvin's Epistle to Protector Somerset*.

“The constant disuse of forms is apt to breed giddiness in religion, and it may make men hypocrites who shall delude themselves with conceits that they delight in God, when it is but in those novelties and variations of expression that they are delighted:—and, therefore, I advise forms; to fix Christians, and make them sound.”—*Baxter on Liturgies*, prop. 10.

“We account it grievous to condemn all those holy Churches, which, from the times of the Apostles, and of the primitive Church, unto this day, have celebrated the public worship of God out of prescribed forms—wherefore, we blame the over nice singularity of those men who would cast out all prescribed forms from divine worship².”—*Letter from the Walachrian Classis of Zealand to the Assembly of Divines in London*, about the year 1646.

“Any one may satisfy himself, from a view of all the particulars, that in the ancient Church the whole of divine worship was administered by prescribed forms.—The question is, whether every minister should have liberty of obtruding private prayers, which he has himself composed, with which no one else is

¹ *Quod ad formam precum et rituum Ecclesiasticorum valde probo, ut certa illis extet, à quâ pastoribus discedere in functione sua non liceat, tam ut consuetudo quorundam simplicitati et imperitiâ, quàm ut certius ita constet omnium inter se ecclesiarum consensus; postremo etiam ut obviam eatur desultoriâ quorundam levitati qui novationes quasdam affectant.*—Calv. Ep. ad Protect. Angl.

² *Durum putamus omnes illas pias ecclesias condemnare quæ ab Apostolicis et primitivæ ecclesiæ temporibus, usque ad hodiernum diem, cultum Dei publicum ex præscriptis certisque formulis celebrârunt,—proinde hominum illorum præcisam singularitatem arguimus, qui omnes præscriptas formulas ex cultu divino eliminant.*—Consid. Contr. in Angl. c. 7. qu. 2.

acquainted, and to which the Church is unaccustomed, instead of forms matured with grave deliberation by the servants of Christ, revised by the higher officers of the Church, and approved by the synod. This liberty we do not grant¹.—*Preface to the Agenda or Book of Common Prayer in the Reformed Churches of Poland and Lithuania*.—Dated at Thorn, A.D. 1636.

AMONG the peculiar marks of difference by which the various dissenting communities of this kingdom are distinguished, not only from the Church of England, but from the far greater number of Christian societies throughout the world, the most obvious are their form of ecclesiastical polity, and their method of divine worship. Unlike the Greek and Latin Churches, and others unconnected with them, both in the old and new world; and unlike many foreign Protestants, our English Dissenters have neither Bishops nor Liturgies. And yet the great body of them, so far from impugning the doctrines of our Church, express in general their approbation, and are ready to subscribe, with more or less cordiality, our various doctrinal articles and creeds. Of the two peculiarities just mentioned, the more important was considered in a former dissertation; in which we maintained that our own Church, and most other Churches, are rightly and apostolically governed by an order of ministers superior to Presbyters, and invested especially with the prerogative of ordaining the inferior clergy

DISS. II.

Two important peculiarities: Episcopacy and Liturgies.

¹ *In Ecclesiâ quoque vetere, quodd uniformiter cultus divinus in toto fuerit administratus, ex omnibus fere circumstantiis cuilibet obvium esse potest.—Verum in eo cardo rei vertitur, utrum permittendum sit cuilibet ministrorum, loco precatio-num a servis Christi gravi cum deliberatione conceptarum, a senioribus ecclesiæ relectarum, et a Synodo approbatarum, suas proprias, a se conceptas, nulli cog-nitas, et inusitatas, ecclesiæ Dei obtrudere? quam libertatem cur non concedamus, his ducimur rationibus.—Primum, &c.*

DISS. II. as well as of confirming the laity. The second distinction, though not perhaps so indispensable as the first, is more open to common observation. A total stranger to great Britain who should happen, alternately, to visit a Church and a dissenting assembly, might not immediately discover that the one class of Christian worshippers were governed by Bishops, and that the discipline of the other deprived them of that advantage ; but he could not for a moment fail of perceiving that the one employed a Liturgy, or series of preconcerted forms, as the channel for their devotions : and that the others were satisfied with extemporaneous exercises. A question, then, would naturally occur to him, as to the comparative expediency of the two arrangements. The foreign visitant would ask himself which of the two systems, that of extemporaneous prayer, or that of a precomposed or set form, was recommended by the greater weight of argument and of authority : he would consider which of them was more agreeable to *Scripture* ; more conformable to the practice of *antiquity* ; and better suited to *congregational worship*.

Statement
of the ques-
tion respect-
ing Litur-
gies.

These are inquiries to which every member of our Church should be able to return a full and distinct reply ; both for the sake of others, and for his own. In the case of religious ceremonies as well as of religion itself, every devout mind must feel the high importance of being ready always to give an answer “ to every man that asketh a reason ” of the particular ceremonies adopted.

Before proceeding further, it may be proper to explain that we speak of *extemporaneous prayer* in opposition to *set forms*, rather from compliance with popular phraseology, than because these two methods of prayer are really opposed to one another. The very same prayer may at the same time be *extemporaneous* in one sense, and a *set form* in another : extemporaneous as it regards the *minister* ; a set form as it regards the *congregation*. For when the minister has not determined previously upon the words and phrases to be employed in his devotional address, but trusts entirely to his own mind for suggesting at the moment such words and phrases as may fully and distinctly convey his meaning, he may properly be said to pray extemporaneously. So also in that case do the congregation. For they have never heard the prayer before, and no sooner do they hear it, than they must implicitly adopt it as their own. But, then the prayer thus implicitly adopted, (though extemporaneous and unprepared,) is really to them a set form. For they were not consulted in the composition, any more than if the words were taken from a printed volume : they can neither add to, nor take from, the language of their minister : they can neither strengthen nor weaken a single epithet, nor control the order of his ideas : they must receive the whole form exactly as it is *prescribed*¹.

DISS. II.

Preliminary
observation.Congrega-
tions always
pray by
some form
prescribed.¹ See Bennet on Prayer.

DISS. II.

To make the case plainer, suppose that I, as one of the congregation, take down the words of the dissenting minister in writing ; and repeat them afterwards from memory, or read them from my manuscript ;—no doubt the prayer then becomes to me a set form, even in the dissenting acceptance. But why not a set form, from the beginning, when I first heard it from the lips of the minister ? Where lies the difference between my choosing to offer it immediately, without the loss of a single instant, or choosing to keep it by me for some time, and afterwards to repeat it as my own ? There can be none whatever. The words are definitely fixed as soon as they are spoken. They become as truly a set form the moment they are delivered, as after the lapse of ages. Time may make the prayer old or new ; but can make no essential change in the nature of it as a fixed composition. The congregation, therefore, of whatever communion they may be, must of necessity pray always by a set form, whether that form be read from a printed volume, or whether it be heard from the mouth of their extemporaneous minister. In the one case no doubt the people know beforehand, what words they are to utter ; and in the other case, they are wholly uninformed : but the words themselves in both cases are equally prescribed to them.

First argument, agreeableness to Scripture.

1. Without insisting more largely on this point, which must now be tolerably clear to every reader, I proceed without further preface to illustrate this very powerful recommendation to a religious mind,

of precomposed forms, in preference to extemporaneous prayer ; that they are *more agreeable to Scripture*. DISS. II.

We find throughout the sacred volume, *numerous and frequent instances* in which forms of prayer previously written have been appointed to be used ; but we find *no instances* whatever in which extemporaneous prayers in public worship, have been adopted. Instances to this effect are frequent throughout the Old Testament. In the book of Numbers, for example, Aaron and his sons are solemnly enjoined to observe a particular form of words in blessing the people. “On this wise ye shall bless the children of Israel ; the Lord bless thee and keep thee ; the Lord make his face to shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee ; the Lord lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace.” The happy consequences of using this authorized form of benediction, are immediately subjoined. “They,” that is the Priests, “shall put my name, saith the Lord, upon the children of Israel, and I will bless them ¹.”

Examples
of pre-
scribed
forms in the
Old Testa-
ment.

Again, the book of Exodus informs us that the Israelites, upon witnessing the destruction of Pharaoh and his host in the Red Sea, joined in the recitation of a preconcerted form of thanksgiving, which is there recorded as a pattern for all future writings of that kind. We find it introduced in these terms, at the beginning of the fifteenth chap-

¹ Numbers vi. 24. 27.

DISS. II. ter : “ Then sang Moses and the children of Israel this song unto the Lord, and spake, saying, I will sing unto the Lord for he hath triumphed gloriously.” The remainder of this composition, so nobly expressive of national gratitude, occupies the greater part of the same chapter¹.

Again, in the book of Deuteronomy we find two forms² of prayer appointed for constant use at certain annual solemnities, when the people should have gained possession of the promised land. These Divine compositions are too long for quotation here, though one of them will immediately recur to our readers, if we repeat only the first words of it, so beautiful in their style of expression and so appropriate to the children of Abraham : “ A Syrian ready to perish was my father.”

In the same book we find a form of deprecation with which the usual sacrifice was required to be accompanied, when a murder had been committed, and the guilty individual could not be found. The Elders of the polluted city were enjoined to declare their own innocence, and to deprecate the Divine anger in these terms : “ Our hands have not shed this blood ; neither have our eyes seen it. Be

¹ It may be worthy of remark, in this place, for the sake of persons who are averse to the responses in our service, and to the recitation of the psalms alternately by the Minister and people, that separate portions of this song were sung by different parties of the Israelites—first by Moses and the men of Israel, who were afterwards responded to by Miriam and the women.

² Deut. xxvi. 5, 13.

merciful, O Lord, unto thy people Israel, whom thou hast redeemed ; and lay not innocent blood to thy people of Israel's charge¹."

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Among the instances of prescribed forms in the Old Testament, there is a passage in the book of Joel which deserves peculiarly our attention. It proves most convincingly that in the Divine estimation the use of long prepared compositions is quite compatible with the warmest and with the strongest possible expression of religious feeling. The Prophet there denounces certain fearful judgments impendent over the nation on account of their rebellion and impiety ; and then proceeds to order a day of solemn humiliation, when the whole population should be called by sound of trumpet to assemble in the temple "with fasting and with weeping and with mourning ;" and when "the priests the ministers of the Lord," in the same excited state of religious fervour, should "weep between the porch and the altar," and give utterance to their emotions in the following expressive terms : "Spare thy people, O Lord, and give not thine heritage to reproach, that the heathen should rule over them ; wherefore should they say among the people, where is their God ?" For the encouragement of the nation in the use of this appointed prayer, the Prophet adds, "Then will the Lord be jealous for his land, and pity his people."

To the examples already quoted the prayer of

¹ Deut. xxi. 7.

DISS. II. Solomon, at the dedication of the Temple, should probably be added. The regular construction of the whole prayer, the formal division of the subject, together with the continued series and almost poetical arrangement of the versicles in the original, scarcely seem compatible with extemporaneous devotion, and obviously suggest the idea of previous composition.

The prayer, too, of King Manasseh on the occasion of his repentance, although not intended for public use, may be added to the number of written forms in the Old Testament. This interesting composition was transcribed from his manuscript into the chronicles of the Kings of Judah, and is twice referred to in the Holy Scriptures ; but was omitted when the Chronicles were introduced in their abridged form into the sacred canon. We find, indeed, in the Apocrypha, a short writing, entitled, “The prayer of Manasseh King of Judah, when he was holden captive in Babylon.” This writing, however, though exceedingly appropriate and pathetic, is of very doubtful authenticity. But, in whatever words the penitent King may have expressed himself, it is important to observe, that though he had recourse to a written form for the utterance of his feelings, his devotion was not on that account the less ardent or the less effective, as we learn from the decided testimony of the sacred historian : “When he was in affliction he besought the Lord his God, and humbled himself greatly before the God of his Fathers, and prayed unto

him : and he was intreated of him, and heard his supplication, and brought him again to Jerusalem into his kingdom ¹.”

DISS. II.

But why enumerate particular examples when we may appeal at once to the general mode of worship at the Temple ? The daily service under the Mosaic dispensation did not consist of sacrifices only, or merely of ceremonial observances : it consisted also in the reading of liturgical compositions, and more especially of Psalms. A psalm, it should be noticed, is essentially a form of prayer. The only points of difference between a psalm and any other form are, that a psalm expresses in verse what an ordinary form expresses in *prose* ; and that an ordinary form, when adapted to music, is said to be *chaunted*, whereas a psalm, under the same circumstances, is said to be *sung*. But in reality the substance of the composition is in either case the same, and the address to the Almighty equally direct and equally solemn. From the titles prefixed to many of the Psalms, it appears that certain of them were appointed to be recited by the congregation on certain days, and that the congregation were confined literally to the very words prescribed for them in the form. This arrangement appears to have been first made with accuracy and precision by David ; afterwards to have been remodelled by Hezekiah ² ; and to have been finally

Service of
the Temple
Liturgical.

¹ 2 Chron. xxxiii. 12. For another remarkable form of public prayer, see Hosea, xiv. 2—4.

² By the last words of David, the Levites were numbered from

DISS. II. established by Ezra, on laying the foundation of the second temple. Ezra is affirmed by Jewish writers not only to have re-arranged the Psalmody, but also to have prepared, (with the assistance of the great synagogue or council,) eighteen collects under the general name of benedictions, consisting of forms for confession, supplication, thanksgiving, and intercession. Forms known by the title of Ezra's benedictions are still extant in the prayer-books of the Jews. These forms, indeed, (if they were really composed by Ezra) have undergone considerable alteration; yet most of them were certainly in use before the Christian æra, and some of them may still remain unchanged.

The Jewish practice of reading Liturgies, appointed by public authority, is alleged, on the evidence of ancient tradition, to have been grounded on the dread lest the worship of Almighty God should be degraded through the incompetence of the minister; and lest the people should not effectually join in prayers, the arrangement as well as substance of which, were not familiar to them. According to Maimonides, a learned Rabbi of the twelfth century, well acquainted with antiquity, "Ezra composed these eighteen forms of

twenty years old, and above—"to stand every morning to thank and praise the Lord, and likewise at even."—1 Chron. xxiii. 30.

"Moreover Hezekiah the king, and the princes, commanded the Levites to sing praises unto the Lord, with the words of David and of Asaph the seer: and they sang praises with gladness, and they bowed their heads and worshipped."—2 Chron. xxix. 30.

prayer which were enjoined by the great council ; DISS. II.
 that every man might have them in his mouth, and
 be perfect in them, and that thereby the prayers of
 the rude and ignorant might be as complete as
 those of a more eloquent tongue." The same dis-
 tinguished writer elsewhere informs us that the
 people were conceived to pray, when they repeated
 the word "Amen" at the conclusion of the prayer;
 "But," he adds, "this is only in those cases where
 the people are not perfect in the prayers, and can-
 not say the same by heart; for they who can
 repeat the prayers, do not discharge their duty as
 they ought, in case they themselves do not pray
 with the public minister¹."

¹ Maimon. apud Seld. in Eutychn. Alex. pp. 43, 44, 47, 48, and 51.

It has been doubted whether the authority of Maimonides, or of the Talmud, should be considered decisive in this question, since these authorities are later than our Saviour's time; but the collections in the Talmud are a digest from more ancient documents; and to deny their antiquity "*idem est*," says the learned Scaliger, "*ac si quis capita Papiniani, Pauli, Ulpiani, et aliorum jurisconsultorum in Digestis Justiniani producta, neget esse eorum jurisconsultorum, quorum nomine citantur. Quod nemo sanus dixerit*"—"Would be as absurd as to deny that the citations from Papinian, Paulus, Ulpian, and other lawyers, introduced by Justinian into his digest of the law, are written by the persons whose names they bear."—Scaliger de Emend. Temp. lib. vi. p. 573. Genevæ, 1629. The Jews can have no motive for deceiving us. The tradition among them that prayer was always in some prescribed form is universally received, and has never been contradicted. Surely the unanimous testimony of a whole nation, and of such a nation, is entitled to our acceptance.

DISS. II.

Service of
the Syna-
gogue Li-
turgical.

When synagogues were erected subsequent to the time of Ezra, public devotion was modelled universally after the service of the temple : except that sacrifice was nowhere performed but in the temple, and that in the synagogue religious instruction was always united to the practice of devotion. Authorized forms of prayer were recited by the minister : lessons according to an appointed order were read from the law, and from the prophets : sermons were regularly preached : and the young were catechized in the principles of faith and morals.

Besides the prayers composed for ordinary use, other forms, as we learn from Jewish writers, were appointed for various occasions, and more especially for the celebration of the passover ; for marriages and burials ; but on these it seems unnecessary to enlarge. Suffice it to remark that the practice of reading a public Liturgy, including forms of prayer as well as psalms, was thoroughly established among the Jews, long before the Christian æra ; that it prevailed among all their various sects, not only in the Holy Land, but in every region of the world ; and that it remains unaltered to the present day¹.

¹ The Samaritan Chronicle speaks of a book of prayers used by the Jews at their sacrifices, "from the time of their legate Moses until that day."—See Falkner's *Libertas Ecclesiastica*, chap. iv. p. 103.

Josephus mentions a sect called the Essenes, who made use, in his time, of prayers "received traditionally from their fathers." (*παρτίους τινὰς εὐχάς.*)—Joseph. de Bello Jud. lib. ii. cap. 12.

To the Divine service thus appointed among the Jews, our blessed Lord, giving on all occasions an example of conformity to established usage, scrupulously adhered. We read of him attending regularly the synagogue, and there joining in the public prayers. His habits in this respect were so entirely irreproachable, that even his bitter enemies, the Scribes and Pharisees (who would have rejoiced to substantiate such a charge against him), never found opportunity to represent him negligent of public

DISS. II.

Our Lord
conformed
to the
Jewish
Liturgy.

“ I shall produce,” says Thorndike, “ a circumstance observable at all their services, that whereas the reading of the law and other Scriptures, and the exposition of it, were done by principal persons, the chief of the synagogue, with their faces turned to the people as they sate, as our Lord in the synagogue of Nazareth, (Luke iv. 16.) on the other side, the prayers were read by him whom they call Apparitour of the synagogue, correspondent to the Deacon in the Christian Church ; with his back to the people and his face to the Ark, and to the Elders. This office, though of good account in the synagogue, as we see in Maimoni (Maimonides) of prayer, c. viii. n. 2., being yet inferior to the Scribes and wise, it is plain to my common sense, that it was not entrusted to inferior ministers, to direct the prayers of their betters, in qualities proper to that work, upon other ground than this,—because the prayers had been composed by those wise and learned afore, and were therefore ministered by their inferiors the Deacons of synagogues. Such is he of whom Luke iv. 20. ‘ And he closed the book, and gave it again to the minister (τῷ διακόνῳ) and sate down.’ ”—See Thorndike on Religious Asemblies, p. 231.

St. Chrysostom mentions that the same practice, namely, for the Deacon to read the public prayers in the presence of superior ministers, prevailed at his time in the Christian Church (ὁ διάκονος τὰς ὑπὲρ τοῦ δήμου ἀναφέρων εὐχάς).—Vide Chrysos. Com. in 1 Cor. xiv.

DISS. II. worship. We have, moreover, the concurrence of all antiquity, in affirming that the hymn in which his Apostles joined him at the Paschal supper, was the very form of praise appointed for that occasion by the Jewish Liturgy¹. The awful scene which followed called forth again a form of sublime devotion from our suffering Redeemer, most affectingly and pathetically appropriate to his circumstances. The words *Eloi, Eloi, lama Sabachthani*, which he delivered from the cross, are the commencement of the twenty-second Psalm; the whole of which, according to the tradition of the Church, he either repeated or referred to. And finally, the concluding words, "into thy hands I commend my spirit," compose the fifth verse of the thirty-first Psalm².

Evidence
for Litur-
gies in the
New Testa-
ment.

It might be imagined, that the use of set forms would be confined to the Jewish Church, and would cease with the Mosaic law. The Scriptures of the New Testament, however, lead us to the same

¹ The phrase in the Evangelists, ὑμνήσαντες has been remarked by Biblical scholars, and in particular by Beza and Ainsworth, to be incorrectly rendered in the usual translations. It should not be, as in our version, "having sung an hymn," but *having sung the hymns or psalms*, viz. those appointed for the paschal feast.

² *Imo Christus in cruce pendens deprecationis formâ, Davide tanquam typo, aureâ observatâ usus est.* Synop. Theologiæ Disput. 36. Sect. 33. "Christ, while suspended from the cross, used that golden form of prayer, which David as his prototype had composed."—Such is the commentary on Matt. xxvii. 46. By the divines of Leyden.

conclusion on this subject, as the Scriptures of the Old. John the Baptist, it is well known, gave a form of prayer to his disciples. Our Lord also instructed his hearers how to address their Heavenly Father, by delivering for their use that admirable model of devotion which bears his name.

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John the Baptist.

Our Lord himself.

As these instructions, coming from our great Redeemer himself, are of the utmost importance to our argument, we shall here enter at some length into the *Scriptural* grounds for the adoption of this prayer; reserving for the second division of our subject the *traditional* proofs, that it was handed down by the Apostles as a form of divine service for the observance of all future ages.

There are two passages in Scripture where this form of prayer is recorded; one in St. Matthew's Gospel; the other in the Gospel of St. Luke. The first of these passages will be found in the well known sermon on the Mount. Our Saviour took occasion to draw the attention of his hearers to the subject of prayer: and having commented in terms of censure on the leading faults of heathen worship, he introduced for the benefit of his own disciples, a form pure from all the faults reprehended in his previous discourse; and in which, as an universal summary of supplication, all the wants of man were comprehended, without omission, and without tautology. The introductory injunction "after this manner pray ye," might seem to intimate, (according to our received mode of translating it,) that the words which follow were intended

The Lord's Prayer not a model merely, but a form.

DISS. II. rather as a general direction, than as a set form ; but the original phraseology is more precise, and ought to have been rendered, "Thus therefore pray ye." The Greek phrase οὕτως λέγει ὁ κύριος so often used in the Septuagint version of the Old Testament, where a message from God is delivered, is always rendered, "Thus saith the Lord ;" not meaning that he spoke *after this manner*, or generally to this effect, but that he uttered word for word what follows ¹.

The other occasion on which our Saviour taught this prayer, and which St. Luke has recorded, took place above a year after, when a disciple requested that he would give his followers a form of prayer as John the Baptist had done, to be a kind of symbol or badge of their profession ². This disciple had either not been present at the sermon on the Mount, or had not distinctly understood the prayer, as then delivered to be designed for regular and daily use. Our Lord replies by repeating with

¹ Compare Numbers vi. 23. xxiii. 5. Isaiah viii. 11. xxviii. 16. xxx. 15. xxxvii. 33. and some other places, with Numb. xxiii. 16. Isaiah xxx. 12. xxxvii. 21. liii. 3. For in the former texts οὕτως λέγει ὁ κύριος "thus saith the Lord," bears the same signification with τὰδε λέγει ὁ κύριος. "Thus" (these things) "saith the Lord" in the latter.

² The Presbyterian assembly of divines at Westminster, in their annotations on Luke xi. 1. acknowledged that John the Baptist taught his disciples to pray by giving them a set form. It evidently follows that our Saviour did the same. Proofs the most satisfactory from that great Master of Jewish Antiquity Dr. Lightfoot, will be found in note (O) at the end of the volume.

scarcely any variation, the very words he had before employed, and introduces this Divine formulary with the positive injunction, “When ye pray, say, Our Father which art in Heaven.”

DISS. II.

The positiveness and distinctness of this second command might seem to preclude all future hesitation among Christians. To borrow a very apposite idea from Joseph Mede, the doubts and interrogatories of the Disciple in question have been the means of certainty and conviction to us. But so deeply rooted, at one period, was the prejudice against Liturgies; that persons under its influence conceived distaste even for the prescribed use of our Lord's own prayer, both as in itself a form, and as an undeniable authority for other forms. For we may observe that almost all the objections against Liturgical services are equally pointed against the adoption of these divinely given words. On this account importance would naturally be attached to objections the futility of which would otherwise have been at once apparent. The two following have been most insisted on.

1st. The differences between St. Matthew and St. Luke in their editions of this prayer. And,

2dly. The omission in this prayer of all direct reference to the merits of Christ, as our encouragement to pray.

Reasons
alleged for
not adopt-
ing the
Lord's
Prayer.

1. First, then, great importance has been attributed to some slight differences which may be traced between St. Matthew and St. Luke. It is contended that if our Divine Instructor had in view

DISS. II. the appointment of a set form, he would have delivered it precisely and uniformly in the same terms. But these differences will, on examination, appear extremely trivial, and the conclusion drawn from them totally unwarrantable. Three particulars are enumerated : the use, by St. Luke, of the expression " day by day " instead of " this day," in the fourth petition ; his change of the word " debts " into " sins," in the fifth ; and his omission of the doxology at the conclusion. Now, in respect to the two first points of difference, in which, by a trifling variation of language, the same idea is conveyed, it should be recollected that our Lord originally spoke the prayer in the Syriac tongue, from which it was translated into Greek ; and that in the course of this translation (unless the two Evangelists had written in concert), it was to be expected that some slight change of phraseology would occur, while the same ideas would be preserved. Accordingly, the phrases " give us day by day," and " give us this day," express exactly the same meaning, namely, " Grant us a continual supply of our daily returning wants." And the petitions, " Forgive us our debts " and " forgive us our sins," or " trespasses," are synonymous, as our Lord's own commentary in St. Matthew abundantly evinces ; where, having used the word debts according to that Evangelist's translation of the Syriac original, our Lord proceeds to comment on the prayer as if he had employed the word sins or trespasses. " For," says he, " if ye forgive men their tres-

passes, your Heavenly Father will forgive your trespasses ; but if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses." And in St. Luke, having employed the phrase "Forgive us our *sins*," he subjoins, "For we forgive every one that is *indebted* to us ;" thereby proving to us that the words debts and sins have here the same identical signification. The omission of the doxology by St. Luke leads to no inference, but that our Saviour, according to circumstances, sometimes meant this offering of praise to be expressed, and sometimes to be omitted. Hence our Liturgy adopts both methods ; adding the doxology, where praises and thanksgiving seemed appropriate, and omitting it in services of supplication or intercession. Thus, after the absolution, when the congregation must be understood to be piously rejoicing in the hope of pardon, the doxology is expressed, as being highly suitable to their tone of religious feeling ; but in other passages, such as before the litany, and before the delivery of the ten commandments in the communion office, the doxology is omitted, as being less in unison with the general character of the subject¹.

¹ It has been remarked that there are greater differences between the decalogue as delivered in Exodus and in Deuteronomy, than there are between the two editions of the Lord's prayer in St. Matthew and in St. Luke ; yet no one would pretend to argue that the ten commandments were not intended for a set form !

For an extract from the sixth edition of a now very scarce tract in the form of a dialogue, published by Lewis Hughes, A.D. 1643,

DISS. II.

Another difficulty which has been urged against the use of this prayer as a set form, is, that no mention is made of its being offered in *the name of Christ*. And certainly no truth among Christians can be better established than the necessity of constant reference to the merits and intercession of Christ their Saviour, as the sole foundation of their hope that God will hear them. But surely that reference is made with sufficient clearness in a form which we repeat in obedience to Christ's command, in conformity with Christ's instructions, and in the character of Christ's disciples. Besides, were it absolutely necessary on all occasions to mention the name of Christ; were it absolutely inadmissible that his name in any instance should be only *understood*, or virtually implied—an inference would follow which these objectors do not seem to have anticipated; viz. that no Christian could ever read or sing the Psalms of David, in which there are continual addresses to God, without explicit mention of the name of Christ. It would follow that the short ejaculations customary among all Christians would be unlawful; such as that of the publican, "God, be merciful to me a sinner," or several others in which, throughout the New Testament, the same omission is made. And there would moreover be still greater impropriety in the Apostolic prayer recorded in the book of

one of those numerous pamphleteers who contributed to fan the popular fury, and to hasten the temporary overthrow of the Church of England, see note (P) at the end of the volume.

Acts, where the “multitude of the disciples” beseech Almighty God to defeat the threatenings of their adversaries, and yet make no express mention of the merits or intercession of Christ¹. No doubt they expected to be heard only on his account and for his sake: no doubt they never ventured to approach the majesty of God, but through the mediation of their Redeemer: no doubt it was their general custom to mention in plain terms his meritorious cross and passion as the only ground of their confidence; but they did not feel themselves under the indispensable obligation of expressing, in each particular instance, a truth which was uniformly and notoriously presupposed.

The Church of England, in this respect, conforms to Apostolic usage. If any difference be discoverable, it is that since the faith of modern Christendom is less established than that of the primitive age, the jealousy of our reformers has been so much the greater; and they are proportionally more careful to preserve the fact in our continual recollection, that we have no immediate access to God, and can only be heard through the intervention of our Mediator. Not satisfied with reserving till the close of the whole service, (according to the practice in many congregations,) the mention of Christ’s atonement as our only warrant for the petitions which we offer, the pious framers of our

¹ The word Jesus certainly does occur in that prayer, but he is only mentioned *historically*, as Herod and Pontius Pilate also are mentioned.

DISS. II. Liturgy have divided the service into separate collects of supplication, intercession, and thanksgiving; each of which concludes with the words “through Jesus Christ our Lord,” or with some other similar expression of humble faith and devout confidence. The only prayers indeed, which our Church authorizes to be pronounced in the house of God without express mention of the name of Christ, are those commended to our use by the unerring language of inspiration, viz., the Psalms of David, and this prayer of our Lord.

Having thus disposed of the excuses alleged for not regarding the Lord’s prayer as a prescribed form : we will dismiss the subject with observing, that our Saviour did not think proper to invent in this prayer, a new mode of addressing God ; but showed his respect for the forms of prayer then in use among the Jews, by adopting, in several parts of the Lord’s prayer, the very language of their Liturgy. Thus that beautiful introduction, “Our Father which art in Heaven,” has always been, and is still, the usual introduction to the collects of the synagogue.

Baptism a
set form.

Another instance in which our Saviour appointed a set form for divine service, is the sacrament of Baptism, which he commanded to be administered, “In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost,” a form to which all Christian Churches have faithfully adhered.

Practice of
the Apostles
Liturgical.

The practice of the Apostles accorded with the practice and injunctions of their divine Master.

They frequented, after his example, the services of the temple and of the synagogue. They obeyed his command, and, as we learn from all antiquity, repeated in their own assemblies for Christian worship, the prayer which he had taught them. They also joined in the use of psalms, that is, of metrical forms of prayer, as appears from various recorded instances in Holy Scripture. To psalms they regularly added hymns and other spiritual songs, according to the occasion; as we learn from the Epistles of St. Paul to the Corinthians, Ephesians, and Colossians¹.

DISS. II.

An interesting example too of Apostolic prayer, according to a prescribed form, is recorded in the book of Acts, where we read, that the whole company of the faithful, (on the deliverance of St. Peter and St. John from the hands of the Jewish magistrates,) joined in the solemn praise of God, uttering an address of considerable length, which the sacred historian has faithfully recorded. This prayer, it must be evident, could not have been repeated by an assembled multitude, without previous arrangement. "They lift up their voice to God,"—not a single person only, but the whole assembly; and "they spake with one accord,"—not expressing each of them his own individual conceptions, but uniting in the repetition of the same words². There is no necessity for supposing

¹ 1 Cor. xiv. 26. Eph. v. 19. Col. iii. 16.

² Acts iv. 24.

DISS. II. that this prayer was composed for the occasion ; as nothing is there stated, but what was well adapted to the daily service of a newly constituted society, in danger of extinction by the persecuting violence of their enemies. At the conclusion of this form of worship, the tokens of Divine approbation were such as could not be misunderstood. For we read, “The place was shaken where they were assembled together ; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost ; and they spake the word of God with boldness ¹.”

Our Lord's rule respecting congregational worship.

Before leaving this first division of our inquiry, it may be proper to remind the reader of a rule established by our Lord respecting congregational worship ; and to suggest that this rule is more effectually complied with in set forms, than in extemporaneous devotions. “If,” says he, “two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing which they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven : for where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them ².” The promise with

¹ To maintain that the people prayed with one voice, because divinely inspired to utter all of them at the same moment the same words, would be a supposition without authority and without example. The method in which, as we may humbly infer from Scripture, Almighty God assists by his Spirit the agents or ministers of his revealed will, is, to suggest the thoughts, and leave the words to be supplied by their own faculties. Hence it happens that we perceive the style of one sacred writer to differ, as with ordinary authors, from the style of another.

² Matt. xviii. 20.

which these words conclude evidently refers to prayer in the congregation. Origen, commenting upon them, observes, "The reason why we are not heard when we pray is, that we agree not in all things. For as in music there must be harmony and agreement of voices, or else it delights not the hearers; so in the Church, assent and agreement are necessary: God otherwise is not pleased, nor will he hear the voice of our prayers." It is to this agreement in prayer, entitling public worship to the denomination of *common prayer*, that Christ has so especially promised his presence. This promise, consequently, seems applicable, in a higher and peculiar degree, to the public prayers of our Church. These compositions being fully known and fervently approved by those who use them, become, in the strictest sense, the joint prayers of the congregation: whereas, in other cases, where the minister extemporaneously prays and the people have had no means of knowing or of approving beforehand the devotional address, the important condition upon which our Saviour's promise is granted, (namely a perfect understanding among his worshippers,) does not seem to be distinctly and satisfactorily complied with.

2. The second circumstance, with respect to which set forms have the advantage of extemporaneous prayer, is that they are more conformable to *tradition*.

DISS. II.

Second argument for Liturgies. Their conformity to tradition.

The practice of the early Christian Church

DISS. II. accorded with the practice of the temple and of the synagogue. As the recitation of pre-composed devotional offices was the constant method of divine worship among the Jews, so also (and this is an important point to keep in view) no precedent for extemporaneous worship among Christians can be found in any document of antiquity. Tradition, from the first ages of the Church, is frequent and uniform, in affirming the continual and universal use of Liturgies. The traditional statement by all parties, both orthodox and heretical, on this point, is the same. Writers of all classes make constant allusion to the use of formularies, as the custom of their own and of preceding times ; but nowhere do they describe that custom as an *innovation*. In the canons of the earliest councils, throughout the most widely distant parts of Christendom, no *introduction* of prescribed forms is authorized as a new practice : they are only regulated as already being in familiar use. To satisfy the impartial reader, we adduce the following authorities.

Testimonies
to the use
of the
Lord's
Prayer.

To begin with the Lord's prayer, which, in obedience to the injunction of our Lord before considered, was faithfully adopted and adhered to by the piety of the first Christians ; it was systematically introduced into all Liturgies. Lucian the Roman philosopher, who lived before the death of the Apostle John, alludes to a form of prayer used in public worship by the first Christians, beginning with the word Father (*ἀπὸ τοῦ πατρὸς*), and alludes

evidently to the Lord's prayer ¹. Tertullian affirms that Christ instituted a new form of prayer for his new disciples of the New Testament ². St. Cyprian includes the "delivery of a form of prayer among the divine and wholesome precepts which Christ appointed for his followers ³." "Let us pray," he adds, "as our Master hath taught us: let the Father own the words of his Son: since we have an advocate with the Father, let us, when we ask for pardon of our sins, ask for it in the words of our Advocate; and then how much more shall our importunities prevail for obtaining what we ask in Christ's name, when we ask it in his very prayer ⁴?" St. Cyril of Jerusalem informs us, that in the celebration of the eucharist, "after the oblation prayer, followed the prayer which our Saviour taught his

¹ Lucian. Dialog. Philopatris.

² *Jesus Christus Dominus noster novis discipulis novi Testamenti novam orationis formam determinavit.* Tertull. de Orat. cap. 1. p. 128.

³ *Inter cætera salutaria sua monita et præcepta divina, quibus populo suo consuluit, ad salutem, etiam orandi formam dedit: ipse quod precamur, monuit et instruxit.* Cypr. de Orat. Dom. p. 139.

⁴ *Oremus itaque, fratres dilectissimi, sicut magister Deus docuit. Amica et familiaris oratio est, Deum de suo rogare; ad aures ejus ascendere Christi oratione. Agnoscat pater filii sui verba. Cum precem facimus, qui habitat intus in pectore ipse sit et in voce. Et cum ipsum habeamus apud Patrem advocatum pro peccatis nostris; quando peccatores pro delictis nostris petimus, advocati nostri verba promamus. Nam cum dicat, quia quodcunque petierimus à Patre in nomine ejus dabit nobis: quanto efficacius impetramus quod petimus in Christi nomine, si petamus ipsius oratione?* Ibid. p. 139. 140.

DISS. II. disciples¹." Optatus, speaking of the Lord's prayer, maintains the use of it to be an "unalterable injunction²."

St. Jerome describes the Lord's prayer as being taught by our Saviour in order that "believers might have boldness to say at the altar, our Father which art in Heaven³." St. Augustin, in frequent passages of his voluminous works, represents the Lord's prayer as a divinely appointed formulary. The following singular amplification of our Saviour's precept occurs in the Homilies of this distinguished saint and writer—"Christ himself said, pray thus : he said to his Disciples, he said to his Apostles, pray thus : he said to us, who are, as it were, his younger lambs, pray thus ; he said to the rams themselves of his flock," (the Apostles and elders) "pray thus⁴." St. Chrysostom rebukes certain unforgiving Christians of his time for their profane omission of an important clause in this prayer, under the plea of shielding themselves from self condemnation. He supposes them to

¹ Cyril Catech. Myst. v. p. 298.

² *Igitur si quæ mandata sunt, mutari non possunt, &c.* Optat. cont. Donat. lib. iv. p. 88.

³ *Docuit Apostolos suos, ut quotidie in corporis illius sacrificio credentes audeant loqui, Pater noster qui es in cælis, &c.*

⁴ *Ecclesiæ oratio est ; vox est de magisterio domini veniens, ipse dixit, sic orate ; Discipulis dixit, sic orate : Discipulis dixit, Apostolis dixit, et nobis qualescunque agniculi sumus, dixit ; arietibus gregis dixit, sic orate.*

(Aug. Hom. ix.—de verbis Apos. tom. x.) For a parallel quotation see Epist. ad Hilarium, 89.

answer, "We dare not say 'Forgive *as we forgive*, but only *forgive us*:'" to which objection he replies, "Do not imagine that you are secured from danger, by not pronouncing all the prayer: do not, under this false security, curtail it; but, exactly as it is appointed, so use it; that thus the obligation of daily using the whole of it may compel you to forgive your brethren ¹." To quote one more authority, St. Gregory testifies that the Apostles themselves "never failed, at the consecration of the Eucharist, to repeat the Lord's prayer ²."

DISS. II.

We might produce further references to Origen, to Ambrose, to Hilary, and Theodoret; but there is no necessity to multiply quotations. Not only the Fathers of the Church, but even heretics, such as the Pelagians and Donatists (to whose systems the use of it was considered adverse ³), notoriously vie with each other in sentiments of attachment for this

¹ Chrysost. Opera. tom. i. p. 287, 288. In tom. iii. and v. the appointment of the Lord's prayer, as a set form of worship, is asserted about twenty times.

² Gregor. Ep. l. 7. c. 6.

³ St. Augustin in particular, accuses the Pelagians of inconsistency, in saying "Lord, deliver us from evil" when, on their principles of unimpaired free-will, they were able to "deliver themselves."

The learned Cassander maintains, with considerable force of argument, that to the words of our Saviour, used at his institution of the eucharist, the Apostles added, in their consecration of the elements, only the repetition of the Lord's prayer; *Eucharistia solâ oratione dominicâ cum gratiarum actione primis temporibus celebrabatur*. Cassan. in Liturg.

DISS. II. form of worship, and in titles of respect with which they honour it. They call it, "The Lord's Prayer," (*oratio dominica*)—"the prayer appointed by Christ," "the prayer taught by God," (Θεοδιδάκτη ἐν ᾧ)—"the precept taught by God," (*preceptum et monitum divinum*) and "by the Son of God"—"the legitimate, (*legitima*) legal or legally appointed prayer," (ἐν ᾧ νενομισμένη καὶ εἰσενεχθεῖσα ὑπὸ τοῦ Χριστοῦ)—"the regular," or "customary prayer"—the "spiritual," the "true" the "daily," the "ecclesiastical," the "prevailing prayer"—the "prescribed, enjoined, or commanded" prayer, (*mandatum*)—the "divine order of prayer" (*ordo orationis*)—the "prayer to be said previous to all other prayers," and constituting the foundation of them (*præmissâ legitimâ et ordinariâ oratione quasi fundamento*. Tertull. de Orat. cap. 9.)—the "prayer characteristic of God's children," and sometimes, (by way of eminence, and to mark its Divine authority,) "The Prayer."

Persons whose minds may have been doubtful as to the traditional adoption of Liturgies in the early Church, will be prepared by the fact above established, that one form of devotion was in continual use, to expect also that other forms would, from the beginning of Christianity, be introduced, as circumstances might require. Liturgies have been ascribed by ancient writers on Christianity to Apostles and Evangelists: particularly to St. James, St. Peter, and St. Mark; after whom the respective services were called in the Churches of Jerusalem,

of Rome and Alexandria. These services, in many parts of them, show marks of later origin : and yet to other parts an earlier date must be allowed ; perhaps even the antiquity which is claimed for them. At all events the titles which they bear establish the existence of a general opinion, that forms of prayer were of Apostolical institution. St. Cyril, Bishop of Jerusalem, towards the middle of the fourth century, wrote a commentary, still extant, on the Liturgy of St. James : and not only Proclus, Bishop of Constantinople, at the beginning of the fifth century, (if the writings ascribed to him be genuine,) but the assembled Bishops of the sixth general council, describe the work as the composition of that Apostle.

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The epithets by which the first Christian writers designate the prayers of the Church, fix on them the character of set forms. Ignatius and Justin Martyr speak of them as “common prayers” (ἐνχαίκοιναί) : Origen refers to them as “appointed prayers” (ἐνχαὶ προσταχθεῖσαι) : and Cyprian of Carthage calls them “solemn prayers” (*preces solemnes*), that is customary or established. In the works of Origen there is an interesting specimen of what he terms “appointed prayers.” “We frequently,” he says, “repeat in our devotions, Grant us, O Almighty God, grant us a part with thy prophets ; grant us a part with the Apostles of thy Christ ; grant us that we may be found at the feet of thine only begotten Son¹.” The same writer describes

Evidence of
Ignatius.
Justin
Martyr.

Origen.

¹ Origen, cont. Cels. lib. vi. p. 302.

DISS. II. the prayers of the Church as being offered “with assent and agreement,” evidently implying that they were pre-composed.

Cyprian. What St. Cyprian meant, in the passage above alluded to, by “solemn” (customary or established) “prayers,” is evident from his directions to the congregation, in one passage of his works, “not to mutter their prayers with an irregular noise, nor vociferate their petitions in a tumultuous and indecent manner;”—and in another passage, “not to utter one thing with their lips, while harbouring its opposite in their hearts, but to keep their words and thoughts in unison.” Such directions evidently imply the use of set forms; for the people could not *vocally* repeat a prayer delivered extempore by their minister, of which they *mentally* had no conception, till after the words of it had been pronounced¹.

Firmilian. Firmilian, Bishop of Cæsarea, in Cappadocia, the friend of Cyprian, mentions a female impostor, who, in his time pretended to the spirit of prophecy. “She took upon her,” he says, “to consecrate the eucharist; using for that purpose the venerable forms of invocation and commemoration. She also baptized many, putting to them boldly the customary and legitimate interrogatories, that she might not seem to vary from the rule of the

¹ *Non passim debemus ventilare preces nostras inconditis vocibus; nec petitionem commendandam modestè Deo, tumultuosè loquacitate jactare—intentione sincerà Dominum debeat non vocis sonus, sed animus et sensus orare.* Cyprian. de Orat. Domin. pp. 140. 152.

Church, (*ut nil discrepare ab ecclesiasticâ regulâ videretur.*) Firmilian adds that this person made her converts respond to every article of the creed ; that she put the usual queries to them prescribed by the Church, namely, whether they renounced the devil, his angels, his pomp, and his service ; and whether they made a covenant with Christ ; and concludes his curious description with observing, that she did every thing exactly according to the real form appointed by ecclesiastical authority (*ad imaginem veritatis*). With the character or conduct of this fanatic woman we can have no concern : but the unquestionable allusions of St. Firmilian to forms of Divine service in Asia at that early period are powerfully corroborative of the general fact which we have undertaken to establish¹.

Gregory the Great, surnamed Thaumaturgus, who flourished about the year 243, converted the inhabitants of Neo-Cæsarea in Pontus, and was appointed their first Bishop. In this character he immediately framed a Liturgy for their use,—a circumstance which clearly indicates the ordinary practice of an Episcopal missionary on the foundation of a new church. This authorized Church service was long cherished with much affection by the Neo-Cæsareans, from a sense of public gratitude to the author. “The people were so tenacious of it,” observes St. Basil, (who about a century

Gregory the Great.

¹ See Bingham’s antiquities. B. xiii. chap. 5.—Firmil. Ep. 75. ad Cypr. p. 223.

DISS. II. afterwards was Bishop of the same city,) “that they would neither superadd to it a single ceremony nor a single word, nor a single mystic form ¹.”

Apostolical
Constitu-
tions.

Our next authority is an ancient work by an unknown author, “The Apostolical Constitutions,” which, though by no means of that early date implied in its title, and though generally referred to the fourth century, is notwithstanding of considerable importance in this question. This interesting compilation, interpolated as it is, and sometimes heretical, (consequently of very little weight in points of doctrine,) is considered by the learned in Christian antiquities as evincing intimate acquaintance with the rites and discipline of the Church ². From this author almost an entire Liturgy might be collected. Prayers, sometimes excellent, for a vast number of occasions, and with appropriate rubrics, are here recorded as prevailing in the early church. It must be obvious that forms of this kind could not have been recorded in the fourth, nor indeed in any century, as being traditionally Apostolical, if forms of some kind had not existed in Christendom long before the days of the compiler. Out of numerous specimens which might have been adduced, we select the following for its

¹ Οὐ πράξιν τινα, οὐ λόγον, οὐ τύπον τινα, μυστικὸν, παρ’ ὧν ἐκείνοις κατέλιπε τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ προσέθηκεν.—Basil. de Spirit. Sancto. cap. xxix. p. 360.

² Dupin. Biblioth. des Auteurs eccles. vie de St. Clem. Rom. “L’auteur” (des constitutions) “est habile dans les rites de l’église.”—See also Thorndike on Religious Assemblies, p. 339.

brevity. It is termed "A Prayer for persons recently baptized," and is directed by the Rubric to be read "immediately after" a form of thanksgiving in the same collection. DISS. II.

"O Almighty God, Father of thine anointed and only begotten Son, grant unto me a pure body, a clean heart, a watchful mind, a right understanding, and the guidance of thy Holy Spirit unto the attainment and full possession of the truth, for the sake of Jesus Christ: through whom, in the Holy Ghost, glory be to thee for ever, Amen¹."

Lactantius and Eusebius mention certain prayers composed by the Roman Emperors Licinius and Constantine, for the use of their soldiers, in imitation of the Church service. The form composed by Licinius was alleged by that emperor as having been suggested to him by an angel, and was thrice repeated by his army previous to a decisive battle with Maximin, the rival candidate for the imperial crown. Lactantius applauds the emperor for his piety, and ascribes the victory which followed, to the direct interposition of Heaven.

Form by
the Empe-
ror Licinius,
Lactantius.

¹ *Precetur vero hæc, post priorem orationem, dicens; Deus omnipotens, Pater Christi tui, unigeniti Filii tui; da mihi corpus immaculatum, cor mundum, mentem vigilem, cognitionem non errantem, Spiritus sancti adventum ad possessionem et certam fidem veritatis, per Christum tuum; per quem tibi gloria in sancto Spiritu, in sæcula. Amen. Atque hæc de Catechumenis constituere, æquum duximus.* Const. Apos. lib. vii. cap. xlv. The reader acquainted with theological antiquity may perceive, even in this beautiful composition, the Arian propensities of its author.

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Prayer of
Constantine
quoted by
Eusebius.

The prayer of Constantine was intended for his heathen soldiers, and was thus worded: "We acknowledge thee the only God; we profess thee for our King; we call upon thee as our helper. Through thee we are victorious. Through thee we overthrow our enemies. We give thee thanks for all thy mercies to this present time, and hope in thee for mercies to come. We are all thy humble supplicants, beseeching thee to preserve Constantine our emperor, with his pious family, and to grant that he may long reign over us in safety and in victory¹."

The composition of this imperial formulary has been the ground of an insinuation, that no public prayers were used at that time in the Church. But the historian assures us that this prayer, composed by Constantine, was for the heathen part of his army, (for whose religious wants the Christian Church could not be expected to have had services regularly preappointed :) and Eusebius adds, that the Christian soldiers were required to give their usual attendance in the congregation. Besides, if the soldiers had been Christians for whom this prayer was designed, we should no more have been entitled to infer, that the Church had no public forms in the days of Constantine, than to conclude, because prayers were framed at the last revision of our own Liturgy in the reign of Charles the Second, "to be used at sea," that no book of

¹ Euseb. de vit. Constant. lib. iv. cap. 20.

common prayer had previously appeared in Eng- DISS. II.
land.

The practice of the Church in the days of Constantine is further evident, from the history of his life by Eusebius; in which we read, that besides attending public worship, the emperor directed the devotions of his own family, using for that purpose the “appointed” prayers (εὐχὰς ἐνθέσμονας) of the Church¹. The meaning of the epithet ἐνθέσμονας which we translate “appointed” is clearly defined by the application of it, in another passage of the same biographer, to the prayer already mentioned as being written for the heathen soldiers.

Family
prayers of
Constantine.

Before quitting Eusebius, it will be important to remark another interesting testimony which his writings afford to the existence and use of Liturgies, in an age far earlier than his own, or rather in the Apostolic age itself. He quotes Josephus, mentioning a peculiar sect of religionists, under the name of Essenes or Therapeutæ, who offered to God at stated times of the day certain prayers received traditionally from their forefathers (πατρίας τινας εὐχάς)². A branch of his sect was settled at Alexandria, in Egypt, and are more fully spoken of by Philo Judæus, another writer contemporary with the Apostles³, who describes their churches; their modes of worship; their festivals; their appointed fasts; and even their psalmody in

Josephus
and Philo
quoted by
Eusebius.

¹ Ibid. cap. 17. ² Joseph. de Bell. Jud. lib. ii. cap. 12.

³ Philo de vitâ contemp. tom. ii. p. 12. 14.

DISS. II.

By St. Jerome and others.

anthems, by alternate responses, of different quires in the congregation. Eusebius, followed by St. Jerome, and many learned writers of that later age, remarks of this singular people, that their ordinances of divine worship so strikingly resembled those of the Christian Church in Apostolic times, that the Alexandrian Therapeutæ must themselves have been Christians¹.

Evidence of Epiphanius.

An accusation about the year 368 was preferred against Epiphanius, Bishop of Salamis, in Cyprus, that at the consecration of the Eucharist, he prayed for John, Bishop of Jerusalem, as for a heretic. The Cypriot Bishop defends himself in a manner which implies evidently that he prayed by a prescribed form. He declares his regret that officious persons should have attempted to sow dissensions among brethren; and solemnly avows that, though he privately regarded the Bishop as far from orthodox in the faith, yet the charge of proclaiming the secret sentiments publicly from the altar was altogether unfounded. "For," says he, "though in my heart I always pray that you may become a sound believer; yet, most beloved, to speak the simple truth, I never prayed so in the hearing of others; lest I should appear to hold you in disesteem. But when we repeat the prayers in the communion office, we say for all, and we say for you, 'watch over him who preaches the truth:' or at all events we say, 'Hear us, O Lord, and watch over him,

¹ Euseb. Eccles. Hist. lib. ii. cap. 17. Hieron. de Scriptor.

that he may preach the truth :’ thus praying as the occasion directs, and as the order” (coherence or connection) “of the prayer requires”¹

DISS. II.

It is here apparent that Epiphanius alludes to the two occasions on which prayers for the clergy were offered in the ancient communion offices, once before the oblation, and again after it ; and that he never prayed in public for his heretical brother of Jerusalem, but in the one or in the other of these two forms.

Optatus, an African Bishop, already more than once referred to, wrote against the Donatists ; an ancient sect, who, underpretence of peculiarsanctity, had separated from the Catholic communion, and who limited the Church of Christ exclusively to their own party. In the course of his argument he mentions a form of prayer, which according to established usage they would be obliged to repeat ; though he maintains that it was contrary to their own contracted views and principles. “ Who has any doubt that you would never venture to omit the canonical form appointed in the office for the communion ? You declare in that form that you pray for the one universal Church throughout the

Optatus.

¹ *Quando complemus orationem secundum ritum mysteriorum, et pro omnibus et pro te quoque dicimus : custodi illum, qui prædicat veritatem. Vel certe ita, Tu præsta, Domine, et custodi ut ille verbum prædicet veritatis : sicut occasio sermonis se tulerit et habuerit oratio consequentiam.* Epiphan. Ep. ad Joan. Episc. Hierosolym, p. 313. See Bennet on Prayer, p. 184. and Bingham’s Antiquities, lib. xiii. chap. 5.

DISS. II. world¹.” Into this dispute between Optatus and the Donatists we have no necessity for entering: but the existence of prescribed prayers, having authority so ancient as to be admitted by both parties, seems incontestable.

Basil.

The testimony of St. Basil to the ancient use of Liturgies is clear and apposite. Enlarging on the importance of tradition, he mentions the prayer of consecration in the Lord’s Supper as being one among many valuable monuments traditionally received by Christians, yet not contained in the Holy Scriptures. “Which,” says he, “of the inspired writers has left on record the words of the invocation used in consecrating the bread and wine in the Eucharist? These words however we have received by tradition independently of the Scriptures².” On this quotation we need scarcely remark that words handed down by tradition would not be extemporaneous.

The Emperor Julian quoted by Gregory Nazianzen and by Sozomen.

These formularies of ancient devotion seem to have had great solemnity and impressiveness, since the Apostate Emperor Julian never could divest himself of the early influence which they produced upon his mind. Such was his admiration of the

¹ *Quis dubitet vos illud legitimum in Sacramentorum mysterio præterire non posse? Offerre vos dicitis pro una ecclesiâ, quæ sit in toto terrarum orbe diffusa.* Optat. lib. ii. p. 53.

² *Τὰ τε ἐπικλήσεως ῥήματα ἐπὶ τῇ ἀναδείξει τοῦ ἄρτου τῆς εὐχαριστίας καὶ τοῦ ποτηρίου τῆς εὐλογίας, τίς τῶν ἁγίων ἐγγράφως ἡμῖν καταλέλοιπεν—ἐκ τοῦ ἀγράφου διδασκαλίας παραλαβόντες.*—Basil. de Spiritu Sancto, cap. xxvii. p. 351.

Christian forms of worship, “handed down and still preserved in the church” (παραδεδομένοις καὶ εἰς τὸδε τετηρημένοις τύποις τῆς ἐκκλησίας), that he wished the heathen priests in this respect to take a lesson from the Christians; and in particular, to have forms of prayer in parts (εὐχῶν τύπον ἐν μέρει), that is, either divided into separate collects, or so arranged that the people might make responses. This fact is related both by Gregory Nazianzen and by Sozomen the historian¹.

DISS. II.

The works of St. Augustin, our next authority, so abound in Liturgical quotations, that in the opinion of some divines, the whole Liturgy of the African Churches might be extracted from his writings. He mentions a form of devotion prevailing in Africa, which in some respects corresponds to our Litany, but bears perhaps still nearer resemblance to what are called *bidding prayers*. The Deacon² enumerated in a regular series the various blessings to be prayed for, and the people audibly responded, “Lord, hear us—Lord, help us,” or “Lord, have mercy upon us,” according to the tenor of each petition.

Evidence of Augustin.

¹ Nazianzen, Orat. iii. p. 102. Sozom. lib. v. cap. 16.

² The circumstance that the Deacon officiated in the presence of his ecclesiastical superiors, would in itself be a conclusive argument that he prayed by a set form. No Bishop or Presbyter would be likely to have his devotions directed by the extemporaneous compositions of a subordinate minister. The duty of Deacons here described by St. Augustine, is noticed also by St. Chrysostom, who traces the practice to remote antiquity in his commentary on the eighth chapter of the Epistle to the Romans.

DISS. II.

Chrysos-
tom.

St. Chrysostom, already known to our readers as author of the concluding prayer in the daily service of the Church of England, is another valuable authority on this question. The liturgy of Constantinople which bears his name has evidently been much altered since his time; but from his genuine writings, as was intimated concerning those of St. Augustine, a complete view of the forms and methods adopted in the early eastern Churches for Divine worship might be obtained. He transcribes the form of prayer for the catechumens: he speaks of the congregation "repeating their prayers aloud" (ἐπιβοῶσιν); represents the prayers as "previously known" to the persons "who repeated them" (ἴσασιν οἱ μεμνημένοι); complains of persons who "joined in prayer with their lips while their hearts were occupied with worldly business" (ἡ γλῶττα μὲν λέγει τὰ ῥήματα τῆς εὐχῆς, ἡ δὲ ψυχὴ τῆς οἰκίας τῆς ἀγορᾶς κ.τ.λ.); advises those whose thoughts wandered in this manner to continue, when the service was ended, their repetitions of the same words even three or four times over (καὶ τρίτον καὶ τέταρτον αὐτὴν εἰπωμεν), till they could repeat the form with devout attention. "For," says this eloquent preacher, "if the tempter finds you resolute, and that as often as he seduces you to mental absence, he gains no advantage, but only forces you to reiterate the same prayer, he will cease from an attempt so unavailing¹."

¹ Chrysost. Homil. in Dimiss. Chanan. tom. v. p. 195.—In

To the universality and Apostolical antiquity of Liturgies, no writer bears more explicit testimony than the author of an ancient work, entitled, "The Calling of the Gentiles," attributed to Prosper of Aquitaine, a contemporary and zealous follower of St. Augustin. Commenting upon the exhortation of St. Paul to Timothy, "that first of all supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks should be made," or perhaps "should be prepared" (ποιεῖσθαι) "for all men," the writer says, "This law and rule of prayer has been so religiously and unanimously observed by all Christian priests and people, that there is no part nor quarter of the world wherein there are not forms of prayer suited and agreeable to this pattern¹." We here give Bishop Bull's translation of the passage, who stands confessedly on the highest and firmest ground as an investigator of Christian antiquity. The Bishop states his own opinion in the following decided terms: "Sure I am the primitive Catholic Church understood this to be the meaning of the Apostle. Hence, in all the Churches of Christ over the world, however distant from each other, we find set forms of prayer suited and conformed to this direction of the Apostle²."

DISS. II.

Prosper of
Aquitaine.

magnum Hebdom. Hom. 78. tom. v. p. 546, 547. Hom. 18. in 2 Cor. tom. iii. p. 646. 647.

¹ *Hanc legem supplicationis ita omnium sacerdotum et omnium fidelium devotio concorditer tenet, ut nulla pars mundi sit in quâ hujusmodi orationes non celebrentur à populis Christianis.*

² Bull's Sermons, vol. ii.

DISS. II.

Isidore of
Seville.

We now come to our latest authority, and conclude our citations from individual writers, with the evidence of Isidore, Bishop of Seville, who (A.D. 595) traces Liturgies to the beginning of Christianity. He affirms them to have arisen from the practice and example of Christ, who directed his disciples to use the Lord's prayer as a set form; and argues that from thence the custom in the Christian Church of composing and using Liturgical compositions took its rise¹.

Canons of
Councils.

Having now sufficiently established that the Fathers, in all ages, mention prayer by prescribed forms, (either simply, as the existing practice of the Church in their own times, or as a practice handed down to them from antiquity,) let us proceed to inquire whether the canons of the earliest councils may not be quoted to the same effect. This inquiry may be very soon completed: for there are three councils only, the decrees of which require to be examined; that of Laodicea, between A.D. 360 and 370, that of Carthage in A.D. 397, and that of Milevis in A.D. 402.

Council of
Laodicea.

By the assembled Bishops at Laodicea, it was ordained that "there should always be the very same Liturgy of prayers at the afternoon and at the evening service²;" alluding plainly to a Liturgy

¹ Isidor. de Eccles. off. lib. i. cap. 9.

² Περὶ τοῦ τὴν αὐτὴν λειτουργίαν τῶν εὐχῶν πάντοτε, καὶ ἐν ταῖς ἐννάταις καὶ ἐν ταῖς ἑσπέραις ὀφείλειν γίνεσθαι.—Apud Bever. pag. 461.—It is curious to observe that in the next following canon of this Council (Can. 19.) the introductory or first prayer of the faithful (τὴν πρώτην εὐχὴν τῶν πιστῶν) is to be made by the

as already in existence, and requiring only that the service of the afternoon should be repeated in the evening. The occasion of the canon in question is stated to be this¹: that some conceited persons presumed to read, as parts of the evening service, certain prayers composed by themselves; and being reprimanded for their presumption, endeavoured to excuse the innovation, by affirming that the *prayers which they had received by tradition from their fathers* (τὰς παρὰ τῶν πατέρων δεδομένας εὐχὰς) were appointed for the afternoon: whereas those which they composed for themselves were intended for the evening service. The council therefore seems to have decreed that the prayers received from the Fathers were sufficient for both services; and that no prayers of private composition should be introduced into the Church. This decree was received into the collection of canons established throughout the Church by the fourth general council of Chalcedon in the year 451; an ordinance which perpetuated the universal use of Liturgies.

DISS. II.

Council of
Chalcedon.

The Council of Carthage orders that “whatever prayers any one should transcribe for himself, he should not use them unless he first conferred with the better informed brethren.” We need not waste time in proving that this restraint upon the privilege of *transcription* pre-supposes written forms. Care is only taken by this canon, that no Bishop

Council of
Carthage.

congregation in silence (διὰ σιωπῆς), the others to be pronounced audibly by all (διὰ προσφωνήσεως πληροῦσθαι).

¹ See Balsamon apud Bever. p. 461.

DISS. II. should authorize the use of any prayers in his diocese before they were examined and approved by his brethren ¹.

Council of
Milevis.

The canon of the Milevitan council is to the same effect, viz. that in all the services of the Church “those prayers only which were approved in council should be recited in the congregation; and that none other should be used but such as had undergone revision by men of competent abilities, or had received the sanction of a synod: lest anything should chance to be written, through ignorance or through inadvertency, contrary to the faith ².” St. Augustin, who took a leading part in the deliberations of this council, complains of an abuse which prevailed in his time, and which probably occasioned the above decree. “There are many,” says he, “who rashly and blindly adopt prayers” (*irruunt in preces*), “not merely composed by unskilful babblers” (*compositas ab imperitis loquacibus*), “but even by heretics: and who, in the simplicity of their ignorance, repeat these unsound forms for orthodox ³.”

The foregoing numerous authorities, both of in-

¹ *Et quicumque sibi preces aliunde describit (al. Quascunque sibi preces aliquis describit) non eis utatur, priusquam eas cum instructoribus fratribus contulerit.*—Conc. Carthag. 3. Can. 23.

² *Placuit etiam et illud, ut preces vel orationes—quæ probatæ fuerint in Synodo—ab omnibus celebrentur. Nec aliæ omnino dicantur, nisi quæ à prudentioribus tractatæ, vel comprobatæ in Synodo fuerint, ne fortè aliquid contra fidem, vel per ignorantiam vel per minus studium sit compositum.*—Concil. Milevit. Can. 12.

³ Augustin. de Baptis. contra Donatist. lib. vi. cap. 25. p. 175. tom. ix.

dividuals and of councils, give abundantly sufficient weight to our second recommendation of prescribed forms in preference to extemporaneous prayer, namely, that they are more *conformable to tradition*. Certain passages however from St. Paul, from Justin Martyr, and from Tertullian, which have been much relied upon by anti-liturgical writers, seem to call for explanation.

DISS. II.

Objections removed.

1. It has been thought that in the fourteenth chapter of his first Epistle to the Corinthians, St. Paul refers to extemporaneous prayer as the general custom of the Apostolic age ; where he reproves certain miraculously gifted members of that Church for praying “ in an unknown tongue,” and requires them always to express themselves in a language understood by the congregation ; so that “ he who occupied the place of the unlearned,” might be able to say “ Amen ” at the conclusion of the prayer.

Alleged objection from St. Paul answered.

To enlarge minutely on all the various particulars referred to in this important chapter, would require a long digression into the subject of those miraculous inspirations, which, at the promulgation of the Gospel, were granted for the conversion of unbelievers, as well as for the instruction and edification of the Church. Nothing more is wanted for our present purpose, than to prove that the Apostle’s words are very far from warranting the sweeping inference attempted to be drawn from them.

Let us first of all observe, that since the primitive disciples had been accustomed, all of them, from early youth, to forms of prayer in public worship ;

DISS. II. since they had never in any instance heard of extemporaneous devotion in religious assemblies, as the established practice either of the Jews, or of heathen nations¹; since they had themselves received a form of prayer from their heavenly Master; and since they regularly used in their Christian worship the Psalms of David, as a kind of Liturgy; the presumption is the strongest possible, that they did not overthrow this universal custom by introducing and enforcing a new and unprecedented method—a method too, which we are certain was afterwards universally disused. Besides, on examining the words of the Apostle, we discover no decided proofs that the prayers which he refers to, were private compositions. His censure would equally apply to the ostentatious and unedifying display of the gift in question (the gift of tongues) in repeating the Lord's prayer, the psalms, or any

¹ “Nor was such a form of Divine worship observed only among the Jews, who possessed the light of Revelation, but even also among the Gentiles, who were ignorant of the glory of the true God, and were led only by the instinct of nature (Cic. lib. de Nat. Deor.). The latter unanimously and universally worshipped their gods by prescribed forms, after the manner that each imaginary deity required.” *Neque vero inter solos Judæos, qui erant illuminati, sed etiam inter Ethnicos ignaros gloriæ veri Dei soloque instinctu naturæ ductos talis cultus divini modus observabatur. Omnes enim et ubique uniformiter Deos suos colebant, ad eum modum quem fictum eorum numen ab ipsis requirebat.* See in Durel, p. 325, Preface to the Prayer-Book of Poland and Lithuania. See also the same point proved at large in Heylyn's Reformation Justified, part i. chap. 4.

form throughout the service appointed for the day. DISS. II.
 And, indeed, St. Paul's expressions¹ seem to intimate that there were persons who repeated psalms in an unknown tongue as well as prayers. The psalms, it must be obvious, were not privately composed; neither therefore might the prayers. Again, although these prayers were admitted to be private compositions, it would not follow that they were conceived extempore. They might, perhaps, be previously prepared. Indeed, St. Paul, in the twenty-sixth verse, rather intimates that they were in general brought to the place of assembly in a prepared state by the individual who offered them: "When ye come together," he says, "every one of you *hath a psalm*, hath a doctrine, hath a tongue, hath a revelation, hath an interpretation." But finally, even supposing the difficulties we have urged should be explained away by the adversary of Liturgies, and that we found ourselves obliged to admit, that the Apostle was giving rules with reference to extemporaneous devotion as a general practice in the Church, it would only follow, that a person gifted with immediate inspiration was allowed to pray extemporaneously: but it would not follow that the same privilege was in any case extended (much less was generally granted) to persons, however excellent in character, who

¹ "Every one of you hath a psalm," &c. 1. Cor. xiv. 26. and again at verse 15. "I will pray with the Spirit, and I will pray with the understanding also: I will sing with the Spirit, and I will sing with the understanding also."

DISS. II. were destitute of this miraculous endowment : it would not follow that the same practice must have been held advisable by St. Paul for future ages, when the gift of inspiration was to cease, and when Christian worshippers could no longer have the same divinely granted security for the excellence and propriety of the supplications, praises, and thanksgivings offered in their name to the Majesty on High ¹.

Alleged objection from Justin Martyr answered.

2. We now proceed to examine an interpretation of Justin Martyr, to which much importance has been given as disproving the existence of ancient forms of worship. Justin, in his apology for Christianity, had occasion to explain, for the more effectual refutation of heathen calumnies, the divine services of the Christian Church. He mentions, in the course of his explanation, that the person presiding at the communion put forth prayers and thanksgivings "with all his power" (*ὅση δύναμις*

¹ A distinction is too often neglected to be made between occasional extemporaneous prayers by inspired persons, and extemporaneous prayers in the congregation. When St. Paul, for example, knelt down upon the shore at Tyre, and prayed with the assembled multitude, his prayer might be extemporaneous; but this was no instance of a regularly assembled congregation.

It may also be in this place not inapposite to remark, that the methods by which family and private prayer should be conducted, do not fall under consideration in this discourse. The principles on which, in the opinion of the author, the former vitally important branch of devotion may be most advantageously conducted, are to be found in a small work entitled "Adaptations of Scripture to Family Devotion."

αὐτῷ); an expression which has often been interpreted “according to his capacity or gift of prayer.” DISS. II.

On this disputed passage there is a comment by the learned Thorndike, so clear and so satisfactory, and so tersely stated, that we have no hesitation to transcribe it: “That most ancient martyr that flourished some thirty or forty years after St. John’s death, that is, after the age of the Apostles, relates the course of public service at the assemblies of Christians. After the sermon he thus describes what follows: ἔπειτα ἀνιστάμεθα πάντες, καὶ εὐχὰς πέμπομεν, καὶ ὡς προέφημεν, πανσαμένων ἡμῶν τῆς εὐχῆς, ἄρτος προσφέρεται, καὶ οἶνος, καὶ ὕδωρ, καὶ ὁ προεστὼς εὐχὰς ὁμοίως καὶ εὐχαριστίας, ὅση δύναμις αὐτῷ ἀναπέμπει. After” (afterwards) “*we all rise, and send forth prayers, and as we said before, when we have done praying, bread, and wine, and water are offered: and the Ruler likewise sendeth forth prayers and thanksgivings with all his might.*” Here you have the prayers of the whole congregation in the first place, which, therefore, are called in the words related in the beginning of this chapter κοιναὶ εὐχαὶ common prayers, or prayers of the whole congregation; to distinguish them from those prayers and thanksgivings, which he saith were made afterwards for consecrating of the Eucharist, by the Bishop or Presbyter alone, though in behalf of the people. Where, by the way, you may see further that Justine means by those words ὅση δύναμις αὐτῷ to expresse nothing but that earnest devotion

DISS. II. which those prayers were offered with, by that which he addeth, *ὁμοίως* or *likewise*. For having said in the words alledged afore, that the congregation made the former sort, which he calleth their common prayer, *ἐντόνως*, or *vehemently*; he addeth that the Bishop made the thanksgiving, which the Eucharist was consecrated with, *ὁμοίως ὅση δύναμις αὐτῷ* in like sort with all his might: with the like earnest devotion which the other were made with¹.”

The criticism of this learned antiquary is corroborated by Barbon, Bingham, Falkner, and other excellent authorities. Barbon censures those pseudo-scholars who “unskilfullie and partiallie” confound *ὅση δύναμις* according to his “abilitie,” and *κατὰ δύναμιν*, with all his might,—two phrases, he observes, which there is “a great difference between².” Falkner insists that the construction here contended for by the anti-liturgical grammarian, is “not consistent with the use of the same phrase in another place of the same apology; where he discourseth also of their prayers at the Eucharist, and speaketh of all Christians (who were not all to compose prayers according to their ability for that service,) that they were *ὅση δύναμις αἰνοῦντες*, praising God with prayers and thanksgivings with all their might; that is, with the greatest intention and fervency of heart and spirit;

¹ Thorndike on Religious Assemblies, p. 338. and for other cases see p. 234. 236. 335.

² Barbon, p. 29.

and this is properly the sense of ὅση δύναμις, as may be evinced from the use thereof in other places¹.” DISS. II.

“There is,” says Bingham, “no solidity in the argument brought against Liturgies, from Justin’s saying that the Bishop prayed and gave thanks, ὅση δύναμις, with all his ability or power. For this may not at all relate to the invention of words, but to the ardency and intenseness of devotion, which may be in the use of prescribed forms as well as those of immediate conception. And so it is plain the very same phrase is used by Nazianzen, when he exhorts the Christians to sing ὅση δύναμις, *with all their might*, that triumphal hymn² upon the death of Julian, which the children of Israel sang when the Egyptians were drowned in the Red Sea, which was not an extempore hymn, but a form composed by Moses, and appointed to be sung alternately by the congregation of Israel. Exod. xv. So that after all the pains that have been taken by some late writers to draw an argument against Liturgies out of this passage of Justin, there is no reason for such a conclusion. And yet this is the only passage that is brought against them³.”

3. As Justin Martyr cannot with any truth be pronounced a voucher for extemporaneous prayer, neither can Tertullian. This latter apologist, to vindicate the loyalty of the Christian Church

Alleged objection from Tertullian answered.

¹ Falkner’s *Libertas Ecclesiastica*, chap. iv. sect. 2. p. 113.

² Naz. Orat. 3. quæ est 1. *Invectiv. contr. Julian.* t. i. p. 54.

³ Bingham’s *Antiquities*. B. xiii. ch. v. p. 136.

DISS. II. arraigned before the Emperor Severus, affirms that Christians prayed for the emperor, “without a prompter, because they prayed from the heart,” meaning, it is conjectured, that they prayed extempore. His words are, “With eyes raised to heaven, with hands outspread, in token of our innocence; with heads uncovered, as having no crime to blush for; without a prompter, because we pray by heart,—we Christians, all of us, at all times, implore for all emperors, length of life; security of government; a safe household; a valiant army; a loyal senate; an industrious people; a world at peace; and whatever else can be prayed for by man, or by Cæsar¹.” The expression “without a prompter” (*sine monitore*) literally taken, as exclusive of all prompting, must exclude the prompting of an individual still more effectually than the prompting of a book. It must exclude still more expressly the dictation of a minister, addressing prayers to God, than the dictation of a Liturgy. And we must consequently infer that there were no common prayers in the days of Tertullian; but that in the congregation every private Christian, without concert with his brethren, offered separately his own petitions. So absurd a notion

¹ *Illuc suspicientes Christiani manibus expansis, quia innocuis; capite nudo, quia non erubescimus; sine monitore, quia de pectore oramus; precantes sumus omnes semper pro omnibus Imperatoribus, vitam illis prolixam, imperium securum, domum tutam, exercitus fortes, senatum fidelem, populum probum, orbem quietum, et quæcunque hominis vel Cæsaris vota sunt.* Tertul. Apolog. c. 30.

must be at once rejected. The true meaning of this ancient writer, if (which is extremely doubtful) he refers at all to public worship¹, appears to be, that the people required no prompter because they prayed from memory, or could say their prayers by heart². The Liturgies of that age were seldom written, but for the first three centuries were learnt by heart from constant repetition : and though the minister on all occasions spoke antecedently to the people, yet Tertullian, (in his zeal to prove the loyalty of the Church,) seems to describe the prayers for the imperial safety as so regularly offered, that the people were independent of the minister, and if necessary could repeat the forms without assistance from a prompter.

It has now been ascertained that forms of prayer were constant and universal among the Jews ; that our Saviour and his Apostles, both at the temple and in the synagogue, were accustomed to such forms ; that Christ himself prescribed a form for the use of his disciples ; that both among ancient writers, and in the earliest canons, prayer by pre-

Summary
of argu-
ments from
Scripture
and from
antiquity.

¹ Heylin Reformation justified. Part i. ch. vi. p. 108.

² Thorndike, Barbon, and others, remark of Tertullian, that he affected Grecisms in his style, and that, consistently with this peculiarity, his Latin phrase "*de pectore*" is equivalent to the Greek term ἀποσθηθίζειν, which means in English, to say by heart. "Thus," observes Thorndike, with great triumph, "they could not have showed a passage more pregnant with the sense they intended to destroy, that they" (the primitive Christians) "prayed by prescript forms." p. 237.

DISS. II. scribed forms is constantly alluded to as the custom of the Church ; and that this custom was invariably regarded as a sacred tradition from the Apostolic age.

To adduce authorities from later ages than those already cited would be tedious and unnecessary. It is notorious that Liturgies existed universally throughout Christendom from the period of the latest Fathers we have quoted, to the epoch of the Reformation. Not only the Greek and Latin Churches, but all other Christian societies in Europe, Africa, and Asia ; the Abyssinians and Ethiopians, the Jacobites, the Maronites, the Nestorians, the Christians of St. Thomas in Hindostan, and the Waldenses, had all of them established formularies of devotion. The manner also and degree in which the same ancient practice has been maintained among Protestants, may not only be discovered from our own Liturgy, but from the Liturgies of the Lutheran churches in Germany ; from the Liturgies of the Swedish and Danish Churches ; of the Reformed Churches in France ; of the Church of Geneva ; and of the Kirk of Scotland, in times immediately subsequent to the Reformation.

We need only therefore add as a conclusion from what has been said—that to those objectors who extol the extemporaneous effusions of ministers, in opposition to forms of prayer appointed by ecclesiastical authority, it is an appropriate answer to say with the Apostles, “ We have no such cus-

tom, neither the churches of God." Those who would deny that an appeal to custom or tradition in questions of this kind is sound reasoning, have not our argument but St. Paul's to contend with. Such being the case, no man can with any modesty assert that he finds himself unable to receive edification from forms of prayer so constituted. The feelings of that person are little to be commended, who affirms that in his heart such forms excite no warmth of devotion. To make an acknowledgment of this kind would be to confess incapacity to worship God in the manner adopted by the primitive confessors and martyrs, as well as by all good Christians for many succeeding ages. It would be to indicate a spirit and temper very different from that spirit and temper which have always reigned in the universal Church of Christ ¹.

DISS. II.

3. A third recommendation of established forms,

Third argument. Suitableness to congregational worship.

¹ Four conclusive reasons may be gathered from Bennet, why extemporaneous prayer in the congregation could not have been the practice of antiquity.

1. Because throughout primitive biography, although eulogies are bestowed abundantly on the talent of individual Fathers as preachers, and authors, no mention is ever made of their ability in extemporaneous prayer.

2. Because no clear instance of extemporaneous prayer in the congregation is recorded.

3. Because no notice occurs throughout the writers of antiquity, of any diversity in this respect among different Churches, so that one Church should have a Liturgy; and another be abandoned to the discretion of the minister.

4. Because no opposition is mentioned to set forms in any part of the world.

Also see sermons of Bishop Bull, vol. ii.

DISS. II. in opposition to extemporaneous prayer, is, that besides being more *agreeable to Scripture*, and more *conformable to tradition*, they are also *more suitable to the nature of public worship*, or, according to the language of St. Paul, they are more effectually “done unto edifying.”

Disadvantages of extemporaneous prayer,

The disadvantages of unpremeditated prayer in the congregation are far more numerous than might at first be supposed. They are in several respects unfavourable to piety, both in him that delivers and in those who hear them.

To the minister :

In the case of him who delivers the prayer, there is a great temptation to display his own powers, while he should be solely occupied in uttering the wants of others. Continual opportunities beset him,—opportunities almost irresistible, for the indulgence of vanity and ostentation. His thoughts are liable to be occupied too much with himself and too little with God. His intellectual gifts being in laborious exercise, his spiritual gifts have not proper room for operation. There is danger amidst the difficulties of *composition*, or it may be of *recollection*, that instead of praying according to Apostolic rule, “with the spirit and with the understanding also,” he should pray with the understanding, to the exclusion, in some measure, of the spirit. There is danger likewise in his pious zeal for the instruction of his people, lest he should indiscreetly give his prayer the character of a sermon, and be led to pray *at*, instead of *for* his people.

To these disadvantages of extemporaneous prayer

to the person who delivers it, are to be added those which obstruct the piety of the congregation. In the case of the hearer there is much to interrupt devotion. His mind must be employed in *criticism* as well as in *supplication*. Instead of suffering his thoughts to flow without hesitation, in a channel to which he is accustomed, and which he knows to be safe, he is obliged to ascertain with accuracy the agreement of the words delivered to him, with the sentiments of his own mind, before he can join satisfactorily in prayer with his minister. Some parts of the devotional address may be worded too strongly to admit his assent ; others may be worded too feebly to express the fulness of his heart. Some passages may, in his judgment, savour of presumption ; some of familiarity : some may appear low and vulgar ; some affected and ostentatious : some sentences may be ungrammatical ; others broken and disjointed : some, from want of readiness in the speaker, may contain vain repetitions ; others may for the same reason be confused and unintelligible : under any of which circumstances the hearer cannot with *propriety*, nor even with *sincerity*, adopt as his own such addresses to his Maker.

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To the congregation.

Nor is it only from want of union in matters of mere taste and sentiment between the extemporaneous minister and his audience that such disadvantages will arise, but also from want of union in matters of *faith*. Diversities of doctrine must exist in every church. " It must needs be that offences come." The speaker in his prayer may express

DISS. II. the doctrine of necessity ; his hearers entertain the opposite doctrine of free will : the speaker may use the language of universal redemption ; his hearers believe in reprobation : the speaker may describe the saints as invariably persevering ; the hearer think them liable to fall away : one may impute to *faith* an exclusive importance which, to the other, may seem fatal to *good works*. In such a state of things, which must often occur, however pious and respectable both parties may be, (and which must occur more frequently in proportion as the congregation is more numerous) the one cannot say *Amen*, with truth, to the language of the other.

Benefits of
a Liturgy.

To the
minister.

If we compare with these inconveniences of extemporaneous worship the corresponding advantages of an established form, the contrast will be remarkable. None of the objections we have stated can in any degree apply to the Liturgy of our Church. The officiating minister, having to read a service previously composed, is under no inducement to be ostentatious of intellectual ability. His piety is not embarrassed by ill-directed mental exertion. He can never, in the use of long-established compositions, be suspected, in the remotest degree, of insinuations against any member of his auditory.

Benefits to
the congregation.

The benefits of a Liturgy are not less striking in reference to the congregation. Assured of the excellence, authority, and correctness of the prayers and praises they are required to unite in offering, they lose no time in critical examinations. Their

thoughts flow naturally and undistractedly in a channel to which they are accustomed, and which they know to be safe. They feel secure against the obtrusion of what is vulgar, presumptuous, affected, or familiar. Our public prayers, brought by frequent revision to a perfection otherwise unattainable, have no abruptness, no marks of haste, nothing confused, nothing unintelligible. Their tone of feeling accords with congregational worship. They avoid all needless interference with points of doubtful disputation. Composed long before those questions had arisen which now agitate the Church, they cannot be interpreted to the exclusive encouragement of any favourite sect or party. Disagreement with such doctrines as are expressed in our formularies, would argue disagreement with the illustrious composers of them in the earliest and purest ages of Christianity¹.

¹ It is remarkable that many leading theologians, notwithstanding their various shades of difference from each other, have agreed in their admiration of our Liturgy. They not only have heard for their own edification, but have read for the edification of the people the service of the Church of England. Among these celebrated characters who so widely differed both on questions of doctrine and of discipline, the reader will recollect the names of Cranmer, Knox, Parker, Whitgift, Hall, Taylor, Reynolds, South, Hickes, Butler, Tillotson, and Beveridge.

The advantage likewise of a Liturgy, as tending to stability of doctrine, may be found exemplified in the history of the Polish Church. When Socinianism arose in Poland, which was its birth-place, the great obstacle to its growth was the Polish Liturgy, to which we have occasionally referred. The Socinian innovators accord-

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Summary
of the
whole.

Having now explained the chief points of superiority in the Liturgy of the Church over extemporaneous prayers ; having shown that the use of it is more agreeable to Scripture, more conformable to tradition, and more suitable to congregational worship, I shall conclude with a very few remarks on the great importance of the manner in which the service should be read and heard. Much instruction may be always learnt from the reproaches of an adversary ; and the members of our Church may ascertain a disadvantage peculiarly to be guarded against in our mode of public worship from the general objection of the dissenter to all Liturgies, viz. that they tend to *formality*, to inattention in the hearer, and to carelessness in the speaker.

Observations as to
hearing the
service.

The remedy for these evils belongs in part to the congregation. If, as members of the Church, they would rightly discharge their duty, let them cultivate genuine devotion. Let them make the Liturgy their frequent study ; and not a subject merely of literary criticism, but of religious meditation. Let

ingly urged various small objections (*rationculæ*, as their sounder brethren turned them,) against Liturgies in general, very much to the same effect with those alleged by our own Dissenters, and more particularly against the Polish prayer-book.

1. That the invocation of Christ is nowhere enjoined in Scripture.

2. That Christ is not the adequate object of our worship.

3. That the Holy Ghost ought not to be prayed unto, because not a person, but the gift of God.

them endeavour to ascertain the meaning and the object of every passage. Let them enter fervently into the feelings and the sentiments expressed, and be thus prepared to pray “with the spirit, and with the understanding also.” And let them repeat audibly the responses, that every individual worshipper, taking the share allotted him in the service, may prevent his own thoughts from wandering, and encourage the attention of others around him.

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But much depends upon the minister as well as on the congregation. From the natural effect of sympathy *their* state of mind must always tend to correspond with *his*: if he reads with devout feeling they will listen with devotion; if his thoughts begin to wander, so probably will theirs; if he becomes mechanical and artificial, they will be apt to testify impatience.

Observations as to reading the service.

Under the deepest sense therefore of responsibility for the edification of the people committed to his charge, the great object of every conscientious minister will be, to take a pastoral interest in the sacred duty which he performs; to increase from day to day his own individual sense of its importance, and enter more and more from the heart into the sentiments which he is required to utter. He will be thus prepared to read the prefatory exhortation with persuasive energy; to pronounce the absolution with effective solemnity; to be himself impressed with penitence in confession, and with gratitude in giving thanks; to desire the blessings which he solicits, and to dread the evils

DISS. II. which he deprecates. In short, he will be prepared not only to direct the worship of others, but himself to join in worship—not only to express their sentiments, but his own—not only to read, but to pray.

In conclusion, I have only to express my ardent wish, in behalf of every member of the Church as well as in my own, that all of us (possessing the advantages of a mode of worship so excellent, and truly spiritual,) may, through the grace of God, use this work of primitive piety as devoutly as it was composed. I have only to pray that “all things” as the Apostle directs, being “done decently and in order,” or in other words, that all things being “done unto edifying,” we may receive the edification which they are calculated to impart. I have only to pray, that our hearts and lives may never deviate from the graces we pray for, and the feelings we express ; lest that divine reproof apply to us which was of old addressed to the Israelites : *They have well said the words which they have spoken; oh that there were such an heart in them !*

DISSERTATION III.

ON INFALLIBILITY.

CHAPTER I.

"Holy Scripture containeth all things necessary to salvation: so that whatsoever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man, that it should be believed as an article of the faith, or be thought requisite or necessary to salvation."—*Sixth Article of Religion*.

"Those parts of Holy Scripture which are plain and clear, contain all that is requisite to be believed or to be practised."¹—*Augustin*.

"The Spirit of God, therefore, is the only infallible judge here; and has declared as plainly as any successive judges can, in those things that are necessary to life and salvation, what is to be believed and to be done; which if we believe and practise in particular, and do also in general, and implicitly believe and stand in a readiness to obey the rest of the Scripture, when the sense thereof appears to us, we are in a safe condition, and need not doubt but it will go well with us in the other state."—*Works of Henry More*, pp. 453, 454.

"When, therefore, you can shew, that in this and all other controversies, God hath interposed his testimony on one side or other; so that either they do see it, and will not; or, were it not for their own voluntary and avoidable fault, might and should see it, and do not; let all such errors be as damnable as you please to make them. In the mean while, if they suffer themselves neither to be betrayed into their errors, nor kept in them by any sin of their will; if they do their best endeavour to free themselves from all errors, and yet fail of it through human frailty; so well am I persuaded of the goodness of God, that if in me alone should meet a confluence of all such errors of all the Protestants in the world, that were thus qualified, I should not be so much afraid of them all, as I should be to ask pardon for them."—*Works of Chillingworth*, vol. i. p. 113.

EVERY reflecting Christian, as soon almost as he is capable of reflection, must have continual occasion to observe with sorrow and anxiety the multiplied

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Diversity of
religious

¹ *Ea quæ manifestè posita sunt in Scripturis sacris omnia continent quæ pertinent ad fidem moresque vivendi.*

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opinions a
source of
anxiety.

On account
of others
and on our
own.

varieties of opinion that divide the Church of Christ, on every point or article of Christian faith; the confidence with which every sect lays claim exclusively to the possession of saving knowledge, and the unqualified severity with which each party reprobates the other, as being implicated in unpardonable heresy. On hearing (and who can escape hearing?) the fulmination of these mutual anathemas, we not only grieve for the state of dreadful peril in which, if we admit such principles, a large proportion of our neighbours, friends, and fellow Christians must be involved: but we grieve likewise on our own account. We are visited with doubts and misgivings, and apprehensions, lest we ourselves, through ignorance or prejudice, should have adopted unawares into our creed some article containing deadly error; or should have omitted something indispensable to salvation. We necessarily believe our own creed to be correct, sound, and scriptural, because the profession of it as *our own* is only a profession of that belief: but our confidence in maintaining it is liable to be shaken, our reliance on its sufficiency impaired, our religious comfort and security of mind destroyed, in proportion to the numbers—the intelligence, the learning, the piety—to be found in Christians of every various denomination, who exclude us, on the ground of heresy, from all hope of Divine favour; or who regard our case at best as precarious or problematical. To discover that the evidence, the arguments and researches, which con-

vince ourselves, have not succeeded in convincing others, seems to cast a doubt upon the process by which we reached and established our conclusions : and in proportion as our minds have learnt to estimate the all important interests of eternity, will be our sensibility to alarm and perturbation.

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In this state of intellectual and spiritual perplexity, if we want the Christian industry, the moral courage, or the strength of understanding, to work out for ourselves this greatest of all problems, we are in a state of passive readiness to receive counsel from the first adviser. But here again new difficulties beset us. We are encumbered with help. Not only do innumerable guides present themselves, but each of them comes eagerly forward to conduct us by a different road. And what is worst of all, the very principles upon which they give advice are fundamentally opposed. We are referred alternately to reason, to common sense, to analogy, to Scripture, to Faith, to Grace, to tradition ; and not only to each of these authorities simply, but to all of them in various combinations and proportions.

Confusion
from the
number of
guides.

Among this numerous multitude of counsellors none are more importunately obtrusive, or more dictatorially confident than the Romanist, the Enthusiast, and the Sceptic. It is proposed, for the subject of this dissertation, to examine successively the remedies and expedients proposed by each of these three parties for calming our inquietude,

Three pre-
tended
guides to
saving
knowledge.

DISS. III. and for the restoration of our minds to religious
 CHAP. I. peace.

The Ro-
 manist.

First, then, let it be supposed that we meet with some teacher of the Roman Catholic persuasion—that we explain to him our disturbed feelings, and request the benefit of his friendly guidance. He immediately informs us that our state of mind is the necessary consequence of adhering to a Protestant communion; and that we never can obtain repose and satisfaction until we enter the Catholic Church—until, with the other wandering sheep dispersed over the forbidden pastures of the earth, we return with humble penitence to the fold which we have left; until, in short, we renounce all dependence on the conclusions of uncertain reason, and establish our Faith for ever upon the dictates of infallibility. “That there must,” he adds, “be somewhere upon earth an infallible living judge, an arbiter of religious controversy, incapable of error, an authority from whose decision on points of faith there can be no appeal, is a plain and obvious principle, which, on proper reflection, you will find impossible to be rejected. Not to insist on arguments from Scripture, although sufficiently conclusive, and capable in themselves of proving that such an arbiter has been appointed, there are independent considerations in favour of infallibility which ought to satisfy every reasonable mind: for the wise Creator of man would never grant a revelation to his creatures, and then leave them to the

Motives of
 credibility
 for an infal-
 lible living
 arbiter.

direction of their own erring judgment in ascertaining the truths revealed. The benevolent Creator of man must know that man is fallible; that he needs indispensably a conductor; and that without some infallible conductor the benefits of revelation would be doubtful and precarious. But if infallibility exist at all in the Church, it must exist in the Roman Catholic communion, which alone makes the least pretension to the privilege. Therefore, only reconcile yourself to our infallibly directed Church, and you will no longer find occasion for uneasiness. You will be guided safely through all the mazes of theological disputation. Instead of being 'tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine' on a shoreless ocean of uncertainty and error, you will repose with comfort and with unruffled calm in the quiet haven of infallibility."

On the promulgation of these assurances our disquietude would at once be tranquillized, if we could but persuade ourselves that the promise of infallible direction, would be as certainly fulfilled, as it is confidently made. But here lies the difficulty. The assertions of our Romish counsellor are bold, but the principle from which he argues is fallacious. The assumed principle, that the human mind is capable of prejudging what conduct the Creator must pursue towards his creatures, or of pre-determining what benefits he must bestow, is

¹ Eph. iv. 14.

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Fallacy and
 presumption of
 these *à priori*
 arguments.

incompatible with our nature, and irreconcilable with experience¹. We may perhaps admit, that if infallibility be found at all in the Church, it must be found in that branch which alone pretends to the privilege: but are we warranted to conclude that God must have granted this extraordinary privilege, merely because we think it likely, or proper, or desirable, that he should grant it? Can we safely infer, in any case, that God *must* have done what we think it right that he should do; and make this inference independently of all proof, that he has actually done so? Is it not dictatorial, and hazardous in the last degree, to determine by abstract reasonings, what line of conduct it would be proper for an all-perfect, and an all-wise Being to adopt, till evidence appear that he has really adopted it? We may indeed rest assured, in general, that God will do nothing arbitrary or irrational; but how often and how fatally should we be misled, did we venture to predict that a certain course of Divine action is alone rational, and benevolent, and just—and, therefore, must have been the course actually followed by the Almighty! If we admit this mode of reasoning, and hazard

¹ The theologian will here observe that the argument from “motives of credibility,” as they are termed, is in this view more presumptuous and objectionable than the claim so loudly and so vehemently objected against Protestants. Surely there is more presumption in claiming a right to prejudge what God must have done, than in claiming the right of private judgment to ascertain what God has actually revealed.

speculations of this kind, we should certainly think it reasonable, that if God created sensitive beings, he would make infallible provision against every error or mistake, which might render them liable to fall from a state of holiness into a state of guilt and misery. We should think it further reasonable for him to cause those most essential truths of religion, his own existence and perfections, to rest on evidence infallible and demonstrative ; so as to preclude all doubt or hesitation in the most sceptical inquirer. Or, (to suppose another case,) in disputed questions of political importance among nations, since war and bloodshed cannot otherwise be prevented, we should think it reasonable for him to appoint some great judge of international law, by whom all differences might infallibly be determined, and the blessings of tranquillity and peace secured to all the kingdoms of the earth.

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But God has not fulfilled these expectations, though to all appearance highly reasonable. He has left both men and angels to the freedom of their own wills ; and has created them not only capable of abusing that gift of freedom, but of involving themselves in sin and wickedness, and in everlasting ruin. He has afforded no infallible, no demonstrative evidence of his own existence and perfections ; but has left mankind to ascertain these fundamental truths from principles of abstract reason, and by reflections on the works of nature and of Providence. He permits contending nations to decide their quarrels by an appeal to arms : and

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notwithstanding all the mischiefs consequent upon war, has not thought fit to make that effectual provision against this widely desolating source of evil, which our human wisdom, if appealed to, would probably have suggested ; namely, the appointment of an unerring and authoritative arbiter. We are, therefore, not entitled to argue that God in his kingdom of grace must unquestionably have pursued a course, which, in his kingdom of Providence, he has not pursued ; nor to maintain that to silence all religious controversies, he must indispensably have had recourse to an expedient which, in political disputes, he has neglected. We are not entitled to infer, that he must necessarily have determined, by the authority of an infallible judge, the less essential truths of religion ; when he has left the fundamental truths of all, to be determined by our own erring reason. We are not entitled to infer, that the Creator of men must have made infallible provision against their falling into heresy or “believing a lie,” and thus frustrating the means for their restoration to a state of holiness and happiness ; when he made no provision of that kind against their fall ¹.

¹ “ But it is more useful and fit (you say) for deciding of controversies, to have, besides an infallible rule to go by, a living infallible judge to determine them : and from hence you conclude, that certainly there is such a judge. But why then may not another say, that it is yet more useful, for many excellent purposes, that all the Patriarchs should be infallible, than that the Pope only should ? Another, that it would be yet more useful,

But granting to our Romanist adviser that his representations were as sound as they are fallacious; still they could only lead us to a probable, and never to an infallible conclusion. The strength of the building must be proportionate to the solidity of its foundation. If our faith in the supposed infallible arbiter is to be founded on the validity and force of the arguments and conjectures which have been stated; our faith in the decisions of that arbiter cannot be greater than our faith in the arguments and conjectures which support his infallibility. Since these proofs, at the very utmost, are any thing but demonstrations, and are only probabilities, we cannot under any circumstances have

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Probable
arguments
at best, are
no ground
of infallible
assurance.

that all the Archbishops of every province should be so, than that the Patriarchs only should be so. Another, that it would be yet more useful if all the Bishops of every diocese were so? Another, that it would be yet more available that all the parsons of every parish should be so? Another, that it would be yet more excellent, if all the fathers of families were so? And lastly, another, that it were much more to be desired, that every man and every woman were so? just as much as the prevention of controversies is better than the decision of them; and the prevention of heresies better than the condemnation of them; and upon this ground conclude, by your own very consequence, that not only a general Council, not only the Pope, but all the Patriarchs, Archbishops, Bishops, Pastors, Fathers, nay, all the men in the world, are infallible? If you say now, as I am sure you will, that this conclusion is most gross, and absurd, against sense and experience, then must also the ground be false from which it evidently and undeniably follows, viz., That that course of dealing with men seems always more fit to Divine Providence, which seems most fit to human reason."—Works of Chillingworth, vol. i. p. 296.

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Argument
for infalli-
bility from
the analogy
of the Jew-
ish Church.

more than probability to guide us: and we therefore end as we began, and our disquietude even on our admission of an unerring judge, remains exactly as before.

Our Romish advocate, however, is not discomfited. He proceeds to affirm that the pretensions of his Church are supported by analogy. He reminds us that the Church of God, under the Jewish dispensation, was directed by an infallible human authority; and that the same high privilege, being equally wanted, might be equally expected in the Christian œconomy. He quotes for this purpose those magnificent assurances of God's peculiar favour and protection, to be found throughout the books of Moses and of the prophets; and relies more especially on the remarkable rule established by the legislator of Israel to this effect: "If there arise a matter too hard for thee in judgment, thou shalt come unto the Priests, the Levites, and unto the Judge that shall be in those days, and inquire, and they shall show thee the sentence of judgment. And the man that will do presumptuously, and will not hearken unto the Priest, or unto the Judge, even that man shall die¹."

Answered.

To this argument from analogy we may reply, that the alleged fact on which the analogy depends, is unfounded. The Jewish Church was not infallible. The evidence adduced to prove it so is totally inadequate; and unanswerable evidence may be brought forward to prove it otherwise.

¹ Deut. xvii. 8—14.

With respect to the text in question, it has not the remotest connection with matters of faith : it relates entirely to matters of civil government. The introductory words of the passage, if quoted fairly, and at full length, must satisfy every reader, that they apply only to secular litigation : that what is here enjoined by the Mosaic law is submission to the legal magistrate, not assent to any article of Faith : that the contumacy here forbidden under penalty of death, was not heresy but rebellion ; not obstinate error, but obstinate disobedience ¹.

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Besides, however encouraging the language of the Jewish Scripture respecting God's "everlasting kindness" to his "chosen people," we know on the authority of their own historians, that they went continually wrong. Even in the days of undoubted divine interposition we read that "the people corrupted themselves, and turned aside quickly out of the way which God commanded them ²." "Aaron" (their supposed infallible guide) "made a golden calf, and they said, These be thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt : " again, we are informed concerning Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, that "he took counsel, and made two calves of gold, and said unto them" (the people), "It is too much for you to go up to

¹ If there arise a matter too hard for thee in judgment, *between blood and blood, between plea and plea, and between stroke and stroke, &c.*—Deut. xvii. 8.—An evident reference this to civil litigation.

² Exodus xxxii. 4. 7.

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Jerusalem, behold thy gods, Oh Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt¹." Further, it is recorded of Elijah, that he complained of the Church of Israel, as if it had entirely apostatized and disappeared from the earth. He exclaims in his address to God, "The children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword; and I, even I only am left." We read of Ahab that he gathered his prophets together, about four hundred men, and that there was only one individual, Micaiah, "a prophet of the Lord²." Jeremiah laments over his corrupt times, exclaiming, "A wonderful and horrible thing is committed in the land; the Prophets prophesy falsely; and the Priests bear rule through their means, and my people love to have it so³." Isaiah complains of the Jewish priesthood in his time, under the figurative name of "watchmen," that they were "blind," that they were all "ignorant shepherds that could not understand⁴." But finally, to omit many less remarkable instances of error and apostacy, our blessed Saviour himself was condemned by the Jewish Church and crucified. Since therefore the Jewish Church was not infallible, the argument from analogy, whatever value our Romish friend may attach to it, is all distinctly on our side. If previous to the Christian æra no unerring director was appointed, none may be appointed now.

¹ 1 Kings xii. 28. ² 1 Kings xxii. 6. ³ Jeremiah v. 30.

⁴ Isaiah lvi. 10.

The next resource of our ingenious disputant is to affirm, that unless the Church possessed infallibility we could have no certain nor infallible belief of the Scriptures, for which his Church is our authority. To this sophism we can easily reply, by corresponding cases. The copyists and librarians who have preserved to us the Greek and Latin classics are not, on that account, infallible expositors of classical antiquity. Supposing, therefore, that we are exclusively indebted to Romanism for transmitting to us the sacred oracles, it does not follow that Romanists interpret them infallibly. It happens also, (unfortunately for Romanist pretensions,) that we are not indebted to any local tradition, such as that of the Church of Rome, for the preservation of the canonical books of Scripture; but to the traditions universally of Christendom. Perhaps we are more under obligation to the Greek than to the Latin Church; both because the writings of the New Testament were originally in Greek, and because the earliest enumeration of the inspired Scriptures is given in the Apostolic canons, collected in the fourth century, and in the canons of the council of Laodicea between A.D. 360 and A.D. 370, which are not Romish but oriental productions¹.

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Transmission of the
Scripture
no proof of
infallible
interpretation.

It thus appears that infallibility is not demonstrable by abstract reasonings and analogies, but must be proved, if it be proved at all, by direct evidence. To evidence of this latter description

¹ See Tracts published by Bishop Gibson. Title iv, chap. i. vol. i. p. 18.

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Three re-
quisites to
afford us
infallible
assurance.

we readily give attention, and request our Romanist to inform us what he has to offer in the shape of an explicit promise from God to support the claims of the Romish Church. At the same time we give him warning, that before he can satisfy our minds, he must lay before us full and categorical information on the following particulars : namely,

1. By what organ the infallible oracles of Rome are delivered.

2. By what evidence the claim to infallibility, as existing in that organ, is established ; and

3. On what security we can rely, that our own fallible reason will not mistake nor misconceive the doctrine propounded for our belief.

Our desire of satisfaction on these points is not expressed in any captious spirit, but is suggested by the necessity of the case. For if we cannot infallibly discover in what person or persons infallibility resides ; if the Romanist cannot prove to us by infallible arguments, that infallibility belongs to the person or persons for whom he claims it ; and if further, we cannot obtain from our instructor in Romanism some infallible security that we shall infallibly understand the doctrines infallibly proposed to us ; it plainly follows that the infallibility he so pertinaciously insists upon, must be to us a matter of indifference, attended with no one practical result. Our doubts and perplexities will continue unresolved, and we shall be compelled to seek some other guide to the peace and certainty we so anxiously desiderate.

But unhappily in all these respects the promises

of our Romish advocate, the more they are examined, appear the more unstable and unsafe. For first of all, when we inquire by what *organ* the infallible oracles are promulgated; he is obliged to acknowledge, that this important point has been for ages a subject of much dispute, and a question very far from being yet infallibly determined. Various are the conflicting authorities, the whole of which it would be needless or perhaps impossible to enumerate¹. Some learned Romanists are of opinion that infallibility is lodged in the Roman Pontiff, as successor to St. Peter: others of equal learning are inclined to place it in a general council: but the best informed and most numerous authorities, not conceiving that a Pope or Council singly is infallible, ascribe infallibility to both in

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First requisite wanting.

Organ of infallibility uncertain.

¹ "For many of you hold the Pope's proposal *ex cathedrâ*, to be sufficient and obliging," (obligatory), "some a Council without a Pope; some neither of them severally, but only both together; some not this neither in matter of manners, which Bellarmine acknowledges, and tells us it is all one in effect, as if they denied it" (to be) "sufficient in matter of faith; some not in matter of faith neither think this proposal infallible, without the acceptance of the Church universal; some deny the infallibility of the present Church, and only make the tradition of all ages the infallible propounder: yet if you were agreed what and what only is the infallible propounder, this would not satisfy us; nor yet to say, that all is fundamental which is propounded sufficiently by him: for though agreeing in this, yet you might still disagree whether such or such a doctrine were propounded or not; or if propounded, whether sufficiently, or only insufficiently. And it is so known a thing, that in many points you do so, that I assure myself you will not deny it."—Chillingworth, vol. i. p. 118.

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conjunction, and suppose that the decrees of a general Council, ratified by the Pope, are alone infallible.

This explanation is very far from satisfactory : for we thus perceive, (according to the avowal of Romanists themselves,) our liability to continual mistakes and misapprehensions respecting the real quarter where infallible direction can be found. If we take any Pope or Council singly for our guide, we have no security for avoiding deadly heresy ; for a Pope or Council singly may be heretical. On the other hand, if we study to avoid this danger by attaching our faith exclusively to a Pope and Council in conjunction, (that is, to the decree of a general council ratified by Papal sanction,) we fall into another danger, and may reject or omit some necessary doctrine, to which a Pope or Council singly has affixed the seal of infallibility.

This admitted uncertainty as to the quarter of the earth towards which we are to look for infallible guidance, is a ground of fair presumption, perhaps even of demonstration, that infallibility, is in no quarter to be found. For the very object of infallibility is the removal of all doubt : but doubt can never be removed while the question, who is the remover of it, remains unfixed, and impossible to be decided. To receive assurances the most positive and solemn, that all our doubts shall be resolved ; and yet to be told that the authority for resolving them is doubtful, is to use a cruel mode

of trifling with our simplicity. For it has been long and painfully remarked, as the reproach of Romanists, that, on their principles, the greatest controversy among Christians is, how to fix the organ by which, or by whom, controversies shall be unerringly determined ¹.

DISS. III.
CHAP. I.

Finding ourselves disappointed that this great question, in what place the infallible oracle resides, remains still in agitation, we next entreat our adviser to explain the grounds on which the several parties he has mentioned claim the lofty privilege ascribed to them. And since a living judge, sitting constantly in one spot, and therefore always ready to be consulted, is incomparably more desirable as the organ of unerring truth, than an assembly of divines, whom it is often difficult to call together; we are all attention, waiting eagerly to hear in the first place the claims of the Roman Pontiff, and to receive, if possible, such clear and convincing arguments for Pontifical infallibility, that henceforward we shall be able to rely upon it with infallible assurance.

Second requisite wanting in the Three Organs of infallibility.

The Pope singly.

In compliance with this request, our papal guide adduces what he considers evidence from Scripture, and rests the papal cause upon the following declarations of our Lord. First, "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church;" secondly, "I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of

¹ See Evidence against Catholicism by Rev. J. Blanco White. p. 94.

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CHAP. I.

Pretensions
of the Pon-
tiff scriptu-
rally con-
sidered.

Heaven ; and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven ;" thirdly, " I have prayed that thy faith fail not ;" and lastly, " Feed my sheep ¹."

When we learn that these quotations are brought forward as sufficient grounds for establishing an infallible assurance of Papal infallibility, our first impression is of surprise: and our surprise increases into amazement, the more we try to follow our guide, and to rest an infallible assurance upon reasons so uncertain and precarious. There is, throughout the texts quoted, no mention of the Roman Pontiff whatever, nor any distinct allusion to the subject of infallibility. It therefore seems extremely difficult to comprehend how any reasoning man should thence infer that the Pontiff is infallible. But here we are next given to understand that his Holiness, as successor to St. Peter, inherits all the privileges of St. Peter ; and that what our Saviour promised to that Apostle was not promised to him personally, but to his successors in all ages. Yet, on examining the authorities again, we find no warrant for the conclusion asserted. There is nothing to assure us infallibly, nothing which would even lead us to suspect that our Lord looked further than to the Apostle himself, or conferred upon him any privilege not shared in common with his brethren. Our Saviour's

¹ Matt. xvi. 18, 19, Luke xxii. 32. John xxi. 17.

prayer that the faith of Peter might not fail, and his subsequent restoration of him to the Apostolic order by the thrice repeated charge of "Feed my sheep," have obvious reference to the character and conduct of that disciple—at one time an apostate, afterwards an accepted penitent. They can relate to no other person, and to no other circumstances. And "it is absurd," as Bishop Stillingfleet observes, "to infer an impossibility in the Pope of falling, from a promise to St. Peter of recovery" and restoration¹. Again, the promise, "whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven²," conveys no peculiar advantage or pre-eminence to St. Peter; for the very same power is conveyed afterwards by our Lord himself to the whole number of the Apostles. "Receive ye the Holy Ghost: whosoever sins *ye* remit, they are remitted unto them; and whosoever sins *ye* retain, they are retained³." In respect to the privilege with which that promise is introduced, "I give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven," if (which may be doubted) these words really have

¹ See Stillingfleet's "Vindication," p. 418.

² The phrases to bind and loose were Jewish, and most frequent in their writings. It belonged only to the teachers among the Jews to bind and loose. When the Jews set any apart to be a preacher, they used these words, "Take thou liberty to teach what is bound and what is loose."—*Strype's preface to the Posthumous Remains of Dr. Lightfoot*. p. 38.—See Dr. A. Clarke's commentary in loco.

³ Compare Matt. xvii. 18. with John xx. 22, 23.

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 CHAP. I.

any meaning distinct from the power already mentioned of binding and loosing, they refer prophetically to St. Peter as the person by whose instrumentality the door of salvation would be opened to the Gentiles ¹.

The declaration, in another place “Thou art Peter, and upon this rock² I will build my church,” is a text of very ambiguous meaning, and cannot therefore be the ground of infallible assurance. We have no means of clearly ascertaining whether our Lord refers to the person of St. Peter as a foundation for the Church, or to the confession of St. Peter made in the preceding verse. “Thou art the Christ the Son of the living God.” A large proportion of the Fathers, including Hilary, Chrysostom, Theodoret, Theophylact, and Augustin³,

¹ “This was literally fulfilled in and to St. Peter ; for by one of those keys then given him he opened the gate of salvation to the believing Jews and proselytes, and founded the first Jewish Christian Church, by the sermon which he preached at Jerusalem, which converted about three thousand souls, (Acts ii. 37. to the end.)—And by the other key he opened the gate of salvation, and founded the first Gentile Christian Church in Cornelius and his friends, (Acts x.) who were the first Gentile converts.”—*Manuscript volume by the Honourable Archibald Campbell, a Nonjuring Bishop, first in Scotland, and afterwards in London.*—For Bishop Horsley’s exposition of the same text, see note (Q) at the end of the volume.

² For a full exposition of this text by Granville Sharp, see note (R) at the end of the volume.

³ “There is one immoveable foundation of the faith,” says St. Hilary, “this one blessed rock confessed by the mouth of Peter, *Thou art the Son of the living God.*” *Unum ergo est immobile*

understood our Saviour's declaration as referring and replying solely to the confession of Faith made so distinctly and so zealously by the Apostle. The text itself seems evidently to admit the interpretation. To speak strictly, Christ himself is the sole

fidei fundamentum: una hæc felix petra, Petri ore confessa. Tu es, &c.—Hilar. de Trin. li. 2. "Upon this rock" says St. Chrysostom, "that is, on the faith of his confession"—πέτρα τοῦτ' ἐστὶ τῇ πίστει τῆς ὁμολογίας.—Chrys. in Matt. xvi. 18. And in another place, "On this rock, not upon Peter, for he did not build his Church upon the man, but upon his faith"—οὐκ εἶπεν ἐπὶ τῇ πέτρῃ· οὔτε γὰρ ἐπὶ τῷ ἀνθρώπῳ, ἀλλὰ ἐπὶ τὴν πίστιν τὴν ἐαυτοῦ ἐκκλησίαν ψυκοδόμησε.—Ibid. tom. v. Orat. 163.

"Our Lord," it is observed by Theodoret, "διὰ suffer the first of the Apostles to be shaken, whose confession he had established as a prop and foundation of the Church"—οὗ τὴν ὁμολογίαν, οἶόν τινα κρηπίδα καὶ θεμέλιον τῆς ἐκκλησίας κατέπηξε, συνεχώρησε σαλευθῆναι.—Theod. Ep. 77.

Theophylact remarks, "This confession which thou hast confessed, shall be the foundation of the faithful;" Ἀὕτη ἡ ὁμολογία ἦν ὁμολογήσας θεμέλιον μέλλει εἶναι τῶν πιστευόντων.—Theoph. in loco.

St. Augustin is equally explicit in his sermon on the words. "Upon this rock which thou hast confessed—upon this rock which thou hast known, saying, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God—I will build my Church: upon myself who am the Son of the living God, will I build my Church: upon me will I build thee: not me upon thee." *Super hanc petram quam confessus es: super hanc petram quam cognovisti dicens: Tu es Christus filius Dei vivi, ædificabo ecclesiam meam, super meipsum qui sum filius Dei vivi, ædificabo ecclesiam meam: super me ædificabo te, non me super te.* August. in Matt. xvi. 18. Hom. 13. See Dr. Isaac Barrow's treatise on the Pope's supremacy, and Rev. J. Fletcher's Lectures on the Roman Catholic Religion. p. 94.

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CHAP. I.

foundation of the Christian Church ; and an Apostle could only be so in a secondary sense. In this secondary sense, however, the Church is not founded upon St. Peter only in particular, but on the Apostolic college in general ; as St. Paul more than once affirmed. “Ye are built,” he says to the Ephesians, “upon the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone ¹.” “Other foundation,” he says to the Corinthians, “can no man lay ².” And again, addressing the church of Corinth, (when the same inspired writer reckons up the different gradations of Christian ministers,) he does not mention St. Peter first, as nearer the foundation than any other member of the Apostolic college ; but speaks of the whole body in the following general terms ; “God hath set some in his Church ; first Apostles ; secondarily prophets ; thirdly teachers ³.” The revelations of St. John describe in like manner the wall of the holy city, as having “twelve foundations, and in them the names of the twelve Apostles of the Lamb ⁴.”

There is not a vestige therefore of probable evidence, much less an infallible demonstration, that the successors of St. Peter, whoever they may be, are possessed of infallibility. And supposing his successors to be infallible, there is not the slightest ground for believing that his successors are the

¹ Eph. ii. 20.

² 1 Cor. iii. 11.

³ 1 Cor. xii. 28.

⁴ Rev. xxi. 14.

Bishops of Rome. On this point, so vitally essential to the papal cause, the sacred writings are wholly silent. They indeed inform us, that this Apostle preached at Jerusalem, at Cæsarea, at Joppa, and at Antioch, but they nowhere even intimate that he ever was at Rome: still less therefore can we expect them to affirm that he was local Bishop of that See; and least of all, that the Roman Bishops (in preference to the Bishops in other churches of which he was the founder,) were heirs of his peculiar privileges; and along with other Apostolic privileges, inherited infallibility while they lost those of miracles and inspirations¹.

DISS. III.
CHAP. I.

The absence of proofs from Scripture in favour of the papal claims, is by no means compensated by a plenitude of evidence from antiquity. In ancient times the pretension to infallibility, instead of being universally acknowledged, was not even alleged. It was never so much as mentioned. Churches and Fathers, in the primitive age, on occasions of their dissenting from the Roman Pontiff, so far from yielding reverently and implicitly to his opinions,

Pretensions of the Pontiff traditionally considered.

¹ "Seeing the Romanists themselves acknowledge, that he was Bishop of Antioch, before he was Bishop of Rome; we require them to show, why so great an inheritance as this, should descend to the younger rather than the elder, according to the ordinary manner of descents? Especially, seeing Rome hath little else to allege for this preferment, but only that St. Peter was crucified in it: which was a very slender reason to move the Apostle so to respect it."—Extract from Archbishop Usher's Speech in the Castle Chamber, Dublin, Nov. 22, 1622. See Dr. Parr's life, of Usher, p. 23.

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CHAP. I.

openly contested them like those of any other Bishop, Metropolitan, or Patriarch. Nay, they even sometimes excommunicated their infallible superior¹. The Roman Pontiff, on the other hand, so far from crushing opposition by the verdict of infallibility, endeavoured always to support his doctrine by the authority of Scripture, of reason, or of antiquity. When appeals were made to him by disputants in a later age, it was never stated or imagined to be their ground of selecting him as arbiter, that his decision would be infallible; but only that he merited such a tribute of respect, either in consideration of his private character, as a wise, just, and holy individual, or by virtue of his official rank as Bishop of the imperial city².

When Byzantium was raised to the same imperial eminence, by the name of Constantinople, or

¹ "What say you to the expunging the name of Felix, Bishop of Rome, out of the Diptychs of the Church by Acacius, the Patriarch of Constantinople? What say you to Hilary's *Anathema* against Pope Liberius?"—Stillingfleet's "*Vindication*." p. 408.

² St. Jerome, in a passage already quoted at pp. 97, 134 of this volume, affirms that a Bishop, in whatever Diocese, whether of Rome, of Eugabium, &c. is of the same power (*ejusdem meriti*) and of the same rank in the priesthood (*ejusdem sacerdotii*) with his Episcopal brethren. "For," he adds, "They are all alike successors of the Apostles." This admission from the Secretary of Pope Damasus is very remarkable.

For a further instance of the silence of primitive antiquity, on the subject of Papal infallibility, see note (S) at the end of the volume.

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New Rome, the Byzantine Patriarch was declared by the second general council held A.D. 381. to be of equal dignity with his Roman brother. Precedence only, or nominal priority, was reserved to the episcopate of the more ancient capital. This reservation was confirmed a century afterwards, by the fourth general council held at Chalcedon; in the decrees of which the reason given for this nominal priority of Old over New Rome is merely political, and has nothing to do with spiritual concerns. "The Fathers," say the members of this later council (referring to their predecessors,) "have justly assigned the eldership to the seat of elder Rome—on account of the kingly or imperial authority of that city (*διὰ τὸ βασιλεύειν τὴν πόλιν ἐκείνην*), and they have assigned equal privileges (*τὰ ἴσα πρέσβεια*) to New Rome, rationally judging that the city which was honoured by the imperial power and by the residence of the Senate, and which enjoyed equal privileges with Royal Rome, its elder sister, should, like her, be exalted in ecclesiastical rank (*πόλιν καὶ τῶν ἴσων ἀπολαύουσαν πρεσβείων τῇ πρεσβυτέρᾳ βασιλίδι Ῥώμης*¹).

That the Roman Bishops were never allowed to arrogate infallibility by the ancient Church is further evident from the fact, that they were not allowed even to claim supreme jurisdiction. The Patriarch of Rome had no ecclesiastical authority

¹ Vid. Lab. tom. iv. p. 817.—Grier's Epitome of the General Councils. pp. 61. 94.

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beyond certain provinces and churches termed suburbicary (*ecclesiæ suburbicariæ*), including, at the most, certain districts of Italy, together with the adjacent islands¹. The other four Patriarchs (of Constantinople, Antioch, Alexandria, and Jerusalem,) were entirely independent of their Roman colleague, and of each other. When John, Patriarch of Constantinople, towards the close of the sixth century, put forth a claim to supreme and universal rule in the Church, encouraged in this insolent pretension by the residence of the emperor within the limits of his See—the Popes of that period, Pelagius and Gregory, resisted with great energy his pretensions; not however as interfering with their own supremacy, but as being in themselves presumptuous and anti-christian. “Pay no attention,” says Pelagius, “to the power which he unlawfully usurps under the name of universality. Let no Patriarch ever apply to himself so profane a title. You may foresee, my dearest brethren, the mischievous consequences from such beginnings of perverseness among the priesthood. For he (*antichrist*) is near, of whom it is written that he

¹ Ruffinus in his translation and abstract of the Nicene Canons, gives the sixth of them in these words: “The ancient custom of Alexandria and of Rome shall still be observed, that the one shall have the care or government of the Egyptian, and the other that of the suburbicary churches.”—*Ut apud Alexandriam et in urbe Romæ vetusta consuetudo servetur, ut vel ille Ægypti vel hic suburbicariarum ecclesiarum sollicitudinem gerat.* Ruffin. Hist. lib. i. c. 6.—See also Bingham’s Antiquities, Book, ix. chap. 1. sec. 9.

maketh himself king over all the sons of pride¹.” “No one of my predecessors,” says Gregory the successor of Pelagius, “ever thought of using so profane an appellation; for if one Patriarch assumes the title of universal, it is lost to all the others. But far, very far be it from the minds of a Christian, to grasp at any thing by which he may appear in any the slightest measure to derogate from the honour of his brethren².” The same distinguished writer, in another of his epistles, makes this very strong prophetic denunciation. “I may confidently declare, that whenever any man styles himself, or desires to be styled, universal priest, such a man, by so exalting himself, becomes forerunner of anti-christ, because by pride he sets himself above his brethren³.”

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CHAP. I.

¹ *Universalitatis nomen quod sibi illicitè usurpavit nolite attendere:—nullus enim Patriarcharum hoc tam profano vocabulo unquam utatur.—Perpenditis, fratres carissimi, quid e vicino subsequatur cum et in sacerdotibus erumpunt tam perversa primordia. Quia enim juxta est ille de quo scriptum est; Ipse est rex super universos filios superbiæ.—Pap. Pelag. ii. epist. 8.*

² *Nullus unquam decessorum meorum hoc tam profano vocabulo uti consensit: quia videlicet si unus patriarcha universalis dicitur, patriarcharum nomen cæteris derogatur. Sed absit, hoc absit à Christianâ mente id sibi velle quæquam arripere unde fratrum suorum honorem imminuere ex quantulâcunque parte videatur!—Pap. Gregor. i. lib. iv. epist. 36.*

³ *Ego vero fidenter dico, quia quisquis se universalem sacerdotem vocat, vel vocari desiderat, in elatione suâ Anti-Christum præcurrit; quia superbiendo, cæteris præponit. Pap. Gregor. i. lib. vi. epist. xxx.* Attempts have been made to reconcile the language of Pelagius and Gregory, with the assumption, by their immediate

DISS. III.

CHAP. I.

Pretensions of the Pontiff morally considered.

We have seen that Scripture and antiquity are utterly irreconcilable with the pretensions of the Papal chair. We may now adduce the moral character of the Pontiffs themselves, as a fair ground of presumption that they have not the privilege of infallibility. If indeed we could be satisfied from history that they had all, or most of them, in long succession, been pious and holy and exemplary men, in a degree beyond the ordinary standard of Christian excellence ; that they had been rich in faith and in good works ; that they had been exalted models of disinterested beneficence, of real purity, and almost ascetic moderation ; men whose affections were fixed unquestionably upon the glory and felicity of the heavenly state, to the exclusion of all concern for mere earthly interests, and the little vanities of secular ambition ;—we might have been disposed to scrutinize with less distrust the claims of such truly virtuous and estimable Christian Pastors. But since the Papal character has been acknowledged even by the ablest advocates of the Papacy, to have been in general the very opposite of what we have been describing, we may be allowed to infer, not perhaps a moral certainty, but a strong presumptive argument that such men were not infallible ¹.

successors, of the very supremacy which, (as we see in the above quotations,) those two Popes so strongly reprobate. The utter futility of such attempts, the reader will see thoroughly established by Stillingfleet, in his “Vindication,” part ii. chap. vi.

¹ “I would fain know whether there be any certainty that every

Other strong objections to Pontifical infallibility arise from the want of any certain rule for determining the validity of elections to the popedom, and for issuing the infallible decrees. Before these decrees can be infallibly relied upon, the following particulars must be infallibly ascertained : who are the persons divinely entitled to give a vote in the choice of a Pontiff? and how do those persons establish their Divine title? What proportion of the voters are required by Divine authority to be present, and what majority of numbers must decide? How far shall simony, or fraud, or force, vitiate the election? In case of two elections, how shall we infallibly distinguish between the claims of rival Pontiffs? between the real pope, whom, under the penalty of condemnation, we are bound to obey, and the anti-pope, whom, under the

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CHAP. I.

Difficulties
of ascertaining infallibly when the Pope speaks ex-cathedra.

Pope is a good Christian, or whether he may not be (in the sense of the Scripture) of the world? If not, how was it that Bellarmine should have cause to think that such a rank of them went successively together to the Devil."—Chillingworth's Works, vol. iii. p. 359.

The same learned Cardinal whom Chillingworth here refers to, is very zealous throughout his works in defending Papal infallibility, and even ventures to affirm (Bellarm. de Pontifice Rom. lib. iv. cap. 5. in fine.) "If the Pope could or should so far err, as to command the practice of vice, and to forbid virtuous actions; the Church were bound to believe vices to be good, and virtues to be bad." The Pontiffs, whatever they may have thought of this extraordinary theory, seem in *practice*, by the Cardinal's own account, to have availed themselves, in a considerable degree, of the privilege which he claims in their behalf.—See also works of Henry More, p. 450.

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same high penalty, we must abjure? When schisms rend the Church (and not less than twenty-six have rent the Church of Rome), how shall we discern the true communion from the schismatical? And since the Pope is supposed infallible only in his official, not in his personal capacity, how shall we decide infallibly when he speaks as an ordinary individual, and when as the successor of St. Peter? in other words, what solemnities exactly are requisite to be observed, for constituting a judgment *ex cathedrâ* from the Apostolic chair? what councillors must be summoned? what mode of promulgation must be adopted¹? Such are some of the questions which every candid Romanist must be desirous to hear definitely answered, and which consequently must present themselves with much greater force to every Protestant mind. When a privilege so important as infallibility is understood to be granted, all the circumstances necessary for our direction in receiving and submitting to it, require to be distinctly and indisputably revealed to us. Unless these circumstances are fixed by the same authority that is supposed to make the grant, namely, by Christ himself, we are as far removed from infallibility as ever; and in

¹ "It were heartily to be wished, if he" (the Pope) "should once happen to be *in Cathedrâ*, he would infallibly determine what is to be *in Cathedrâ* ever after; for it would ease men's minds of a great many troublesome scruples, which they cannot, without some infallible determination, get themselves quit of."—Stillingfleet's "Vindication," p. 114.

deciding these essential and fundamental particulars, we are left to mere argument and conjecture ¹.

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To disprove papal infallibility much more will scarcely be expected by our readers : but we will add one concluding observation on the erroneousness and inconsistency of the supposed infallible decrees. If Popes really were infallible, their doctrine would never vary, but would remain, from age to age, unalterably the same : the judgment of one Pope would never differ, on the same subjects, from the judgment of another ; and least of all would it be credible that any Pope should be convicted of heresy. We know, however, from unquestionable documents of history that this was not the case. Two Popes in the second century (Eleutherius and Victor) were encouragers of the heretical fanaticism of Montanus ². Another Pope (Stephen) of the third century was heretical on the subject of baptism ³ : Pope Liberius subscribed his

Papal inconsistencies and heresies.

¹ For Bishop Stillingfleet's proofs that there has been no Pontiff canonically elected since the times of Sextus the fifth, see note (T) at the end of the volume.

² *Romanus Pontifex per literas Montanistis communionem impertiit, quas, errore cognito, revocare coactus est.*—Dupin de Antiq. Eccl. Dis. 5. p. 346. Le Pape les Montanistes reçu dans sa communion, ce qui montre que le Pape n'étoit pas infallible.—Basnage, Hist. tom i. p. 360.

³ He maintained against Cyprian, of Carthage, that baptism, though performed by heretics, ought not to be repeated : but the heretics of that period baptized only in the name of the Father, and sometimes not even in his name : a kind of baptism which no Roman Catholic would now admit to be valid.—See Grier's History of the Councils, p. 17.

DISS. III. name to the Arian heresy : Pope Honorius was by
 CHAP. I. a general council condemned as a Monothelite¹.
 And (not to multiply particular examples) we may
 remark, once for all, that a long line of Popes promul-
 gated, *ex Cathedrâ*, a doctrine which, in the
 present age, is abandoned by Rome itself, and is
 rejected universally as impious and extravagant;
 the doctrine, namely, that the Roman See is vested
 with the Divine right of temporal jurisdiction over
 all the kingdoms of the earth ; and that the Pontiff,
 as Vicar of Jesus Christ, and delegate of him who
 is King of kings and Lord of lords, may call civil
 magistrates to account, and may depose kings and
 emperors, on the charge of heretical depravity².

Second
 alleged
 Organ of
 Infallibility.

To these various objections against the doctrine
 of Pontifical infallibility, our defender of the Roman
 Faith replies by a ready acknowledgment that the
 great majority of Romanists themselves are of our
 opinion : that much abler arguments have been
 urged by them than by Protestants against this
 pretension of the Pope³ : that by them infallibility
 is ascribed not to the Roman Pontiff, who "is
 liable to err and who frequently has erred ;" but

¹ See this case argued by Bishop Stillingfleet in part iii. chap. 2. pp. 512, 513. of the *Vindication* ; and for others equally apposite see Grier's *History Passim*. See also Burnet on the sixteenth article.

² See Evidence against Catholicism by the Rev. Blanco White, p. 33 : and the Bishop of Exeter's letters to Charles Butler, Esq. Letter xiv. p. 271.

³ The writers of the Gallican Church are here alluded to, all of whom oppose the Papal claims.

to a general Council, representing the whole Church of Christ, and combining all its collective wisdom. On our inquiry by what Scriptural evidence infallibility is proved to lodge in a representative assembly thus constituted, we are desired to read the following texts :

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CHAP. I.

A general
Council
singly.

“Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it ¹.”

“If he neglect to hear the Church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican ².”

“Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world ³.”

“I will pray the Father ; and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever, even the Spirit of truth ⁴.”

“For it seemed good to the Holy Ghost and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things ⁵.”

“These things write I unto thee ; that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the Church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth ⁶.”

Our endeavours to extract out of these texts infallibility for the Romish Church are as much in vain as in the preceding inquiry for supporting the Papal claims. A general Council seems to have as little warrant from Holy Scripture to assure us that

Pretensions
of a gene-
ral Council
Scripturally
considered.

¹ Matt. xvi. 18.² Matt. xviii. 17.³ Matt. xxviii. 20.⁴ John xiv. 16.⁵ Acts xv. 28.⁶ 1 Tim. iii. 15.

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it is infallible, as the Roman Pontiff himself. The first quotation refers to the perpetual *continuance* of the Christian Society, and not to its exemption from all error. Christ assures us that, to the end of time, the gates of hell shall not prevail against his universal Church; or in other words, that a community called by his name, and retaining the essentials of Christianity, will never cease to be. But this consolatory promise gives us no security that any one particular Church, or any meeting of church officers, shall be infallible. On this subject we cannot forbear transcribing the judicious comment of a learned Romanist, Tostatus of Avila, who flourished in the fifteenth century: "The universal or Catholic Church never errs, because it never errs in all its branches. The Church of Rome (*ecclesia latinorum*) is not the Catholic Church, but only a certain branch of it; and therefore, although the whole of that branch should have erred, the whole Church could not be said to err. Because the genuine Catholic Church remains in the unerring branches, whether they be more or fewer than the branches which err¹."

Again, the injunction of our Lord to "tell the

¹ *Ecclesia universalis nunquam errat quia nunquam tota errat.*
 Tostat. Abulens. præfat. in Matt. quæst. xiii.

Ecclesia latinorum non est Ecclesia universalis sed quædam pars ejus: ideo, etiamsi tota ipsa errasset, non errabat ecclesia universalis: quia manet Ecclesia universalis in partibus illis quæ non errant, sive illæ sint numero plures quam errantes, sive non.
 Ibid. quæst. iv. in Matt. ad proleg. 2.

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CHAP. I.

Church," if taken apart from, and not in connection with the preceding context, might seem to have some distant bearing upon this question. But on examining the whole passage, we perceive that our Saviour makes allusion to secular, not to spiritual concerns; and is speaking only of private differences among his followers. "If thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone." Three successive steps are next recommended for effecting an accommodation: first a private interview; then the influence of mutual friends; and lastly the authority of the Church to which the parties belong. The contumacious wrong-doer who could not by these methods be brought to reason, was no longer to be regarded as a Christian brother, but as a heathen. He was liable to excommunication, or expulsion from the society; and reparation of the injury committed might now be sought for in a court of law. We do not find in these directions the remotest allusion to infallibility.

The encouraging promise; "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world," is not a grant of infallibility, but a promise of assistance, protection, and consolation; and was indispensably required, when our Lord delegated to his postles the perilous labour of propagating the Gospel in opposition to all the rulers of this world, anding them forth as sheep among wolves¹.

— ¹ "For my part I should think it did more concern our Lord

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His promise that the "spirit of truth" should "guide them into all truth," relates entirely to the extraordinary gifts with which they were endowed, and is immediately connected with another promise, confessedly peculiar to the Apostolic age. "He," (the Holy Ghost) "shall show you things to come."

The words, "It seemed good to the Holy Ghost and to us," in the decree of the first Council at Jerusalem, have left no precedent for other councils to use the same language; unless on separate evidence it can be shown that those councils have the same authority of inspiration.

The position therefore, that general Councils, as representing the Church of Christ, are infallible, labours under a total want of Scripture evidence. There is not a single precept given for assembling them; not one solitary rule for determining their proceedings. As the learned Albert Pighius, an advocate of pontifical infallibility, very justly argues: "There is not a word about general Councils in the canonical books of Scripture; nor did the primitive Church of Christ receive by Apostolical institution any special direction respecting them¹." This able writer represents the practice

Jesus, by virtue of this promise, to make his Church *impeccable*, than *infallible*. My meaning is, that it is a much more desirable thing to secure his ministers and people from the danger of *sin*, than from the danger of *error*. But the former he hath not done, and therefore I much doubt of the latter."—Archbishop Sharpe's Sermons, vol. viii.

¹ *In Scripturis canonicis nullum de iis verbum est: nec ex Apo-*

of summoning a general Council in cases of ecclesiastical emergency, to be an expedient piously introduced by the Emperor Constantine, for the purpose of composing the dissensions of the Church. But the same author insinuates a charge of great ignorance against the Emperor and his Council, who in adopting this course, appeared not to know that the privilege of infallibility belonged to the papal chair, and that Rome was the proper Delphos where he might receive the infallible oracles. This imperial ignorance is a remarkable admission by the advocate of the Papacy in his zeal against general Councils. He succeeds in demolishing the latter ; but acknowledges at the same time a fact which is fatal to the former. For if Constantine and the Bishops of his court were ignorant of the papal pretensions, it must be obvious that such pretensions either could not have been put forth at all, or could not at that time have been generally recognized.

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CHAP. I.

But if the Scripture, instead of being totally silent on the subject, had plainly and categorically declared, that general Councils are infallible, we should only be involved in fresh perplexities : for the question would immediately arise, *what is a general Council?* How do we know a spurious from a genuine Council? Councils have

Difficulties
of knowing
what is a
general
Council.

solorum institutione speciale quicquam de illis accepit illa primitiva Christi Ecclesia.—Albert. Pigh. Hierarch. Eccles. lib. vi. cap. 1, quoted in that masterly work, "The Difficulties of Romanism," by the Rev. G. S. Faber, book 1. chap. ii. p. 36.

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been assembled by opposite parties on purpose to give opposite decrees ; and how shall we distinguish the fallible and heretical, from the orthodox and infallible assembly ? This vital question cannot be determined by the numbers present, or the portion of the Christian world represented by them. The orthodox Athanasius was condemned successively by Councils representing the Eastern and the Western Church. Various Councils, condemned by the church of Rome for heresy, were as numerous and respectably attended, as more orthodox conventions. The Council of Milan consisted of 300 Bishops. At Ariminum not less than 600 Bishops were assembled. The Council of Ephesus included 10 Metropolitans and 135 Bishops. The Council of Constantinople included 338 Bishops. And when the rival Councils of Sardica and Philipopolis fulminated mutual anathemas, the latter, which was heretical, consisted of 94 Bishops, while their orthodox opponents amounted only to 76. As most of these Councils were convened by imperial authority ; represented large portions of Christendom ; and included men of the greatest learning and ability, there seems nothing to distinguish them from other synods, which are acknowledged to be general and infallible—nothing, if we except the sanction of the Roman Pontiff.

Third organ of infallibility.

Here we are informed by our pertinacious disputant, that the papal sanction is commonly regarded in the Church of Rome, as the essential distinction between a mere provincial synod, and a

general Council; that the decrees of an alleged general Council, not ratified by the Pope, are not infallible; while the decrees of any Council, after that ratification, must be looked upon as infallibly determined.

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CHAP. I.

But our ingenuity must again be exercised in finding our way through this labyrinth: for, first of all, no Scriptural reason can be found, or is even pretended for the limitation of infallibility to councils of the description mentioned. The authority, therefore, exists only in the well-stored imagination of our Romish friend¹. And in addition, we are perplexed to ascertain how two authorities, separately fallible, should become infallible by their conjunction. The Council is fallible. The Pope is fallible. But unite these two fallibles, and you

Pope and
general
Council in
conjunc-
tion.

¹ "The low Romanists who are distinguished by the name of Cisalpines, (for serious differences exist, it appears, even in the very bosom of privileged inerrancy,) not only deny the personal infallibility of the Pope, but hold also that for heresy or schism (to both of which, we find, the alleged fallible head of an infallible body is actually liable,) he may be lawfully deposed by a general Council. Such being the case, they must, on their own principles, inevitably hold the infallibility of a general Council even when *not* sanctioned by the papal confirmation: for it is quite clear, on the one hand, that no *prudent* Pope, at least, would ratify the sentence of his own deposition, or confirm the decree which pronounced him to be a schismatic or a heretic; and it is equally clear, on the other hand, that no general Council could infallibly pronounce the Pope to be a heretic or a schismatic, himself all the while stiffly denying, as of course he *would* deny, the offensive allegation, unless such general Council *independently* of any papal ratification, were *itself* constitutionally infallible."—*Faber's Difficulties of Romanism*, pp. 247, 248.

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give them infallibility. If it be asked, Is the Council liable to err who passes the decree?—Certainly, is the answer: for otherwise the Council would, without the Pope, be all-sufficient. If it be further demanded, Is the Pope also liable to err who confirms the decree?—Certainly, is again the answer, for he would otherwise be all-sufficient without the Council. This is a strange dilemma: we must believe the decree to be infallibly determined, and yet must neither ascribe infallibility to the Council who pass it, nor to the Pope who confirms it.

Uncertainty
 of the Pa-
 pal sanction
 to a Coun-
 cil.

Another consideration is the uncertainty and arbitrariness of this papal act of confirmation. The Protestant must not take for granted that the eighteen Councils, acknowledged by the Church of Rome to be general, have the seal of St. Peter affixed to all their canons and decrees. In some cases a general Council is partly confirmed and partly rejected (*partim confirmatum partim reprobatum*)¹; in some cases neither confirmed nor rejected (*neque approbatum neque reprobatum*): in some it is pronounced uncertain whether the decrees are confirmed or rejected; and in others they are confirmed by one Pope and rejected by another. Sometimes the general Council did not proceed with due form (*conciliariter*), or did not proceed with due deliberation (*re diligenter examinâtâ*); sometimes the questions to be determined were not stated with sufficient clearness (*satis apertè*), and sometimes

¹ Bellarm. de Conc. lib. i. cap. 8.

there is a want of evidence whether the Council was general or provincial. "All this," exclaims Bishop Taylor, "is the greatest folly and most prodigious vanity¹."

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Other various objections might be copiously adduced and enlarged upon. Even general Councils, regularly and papally ratified, differ widely in the decisions which they promulgate. "Nothing is more discrepant," says the learned prelate just quoted, "than the third Council of Carthage and the Council of Laodicea, about the assignation of the canon of Scripture; and yet the sixth general synod approves both²." Again, we might observe, that if infallibility be granted to the Church through its representatives in a general Council, the privilege has been for many centuries in abeyance, and (considering the aspect of Christendom,) is never likely to be renewed. And further, with respect to the reception of these infallible decrees by provincial Churches, we might bring forward the doubts which have prevailed among Romanists, whether the decrees are binding immediately on being passed, or only after they have been received³. Next with

Additional
argument
against
Popes and
Councils
jointly.

¹ See Bishop Taylor's *Liberty of Prophecy*, sect. 6. vol. viii. of his works, p. 41.

² *Ibid.* p. 43.

³ "That the authority of general Councils was never esteemed absolute, infallible, and unlimited, appears in this, that before they were obliging (obligatory) it was necessary that each particular Church respectively should accept them, *Concurrenti universali totius ecclesiæ consensu, &c., in declaratione veritatum*

DISS. III.
CHAP. I.

reference to the doctrines which they inculcate, these are often grievously contradictory to reason and Scripture. Transubstantiation, for example, is contrary to reason. If therefore we believe the infallibility of general Councils on grounds of reason, the reasons against transubstantiation must be fairly balanced in our minds with the reasons in favour of infallibility. And as examples of contradiction to Scripture, we might instance the worshipping of images and relics, the invocation of saints and angels, purgatory, and the sacrifice of the mass. We might then go on to show that if the infallibility of general Councils be Scripturally maintained, the texts adduced in support of infallibility are to be weighed against the numerous and explicit texts which oppose these various and very fanciful doctrines. Lastly, we might contend that, in the primitive ages, when Councils were continually assembled, neither those Councils themselves, nor any one writer who defended their decrees, ever spoke of them as infallible. We need scarcely add that Councils could not be infallible without knowing it; nor would hear their infallible decrees disputed without asserting their infallibility.

Third requisite to afford infallible assurance. This requisite wanting.

3. Having now vainly endeavoured to procure conclusive and satisfactory information on two of

quæ credendæ sunt, &c. In this way, as observed by Gerson, the decrees of Councils became authentic, and turned into a law: and till they became so their decrees were but a dead letter."—See Heber's Bishop Taylor, vol. viii. pp. 50, 51, remarking on St. Augustin, b. 1. cap. 18. de Bapt. contra Donat.

the essential points indispensable for our conversion to Romanism, namely, first, by what *organ* the infallible oracles are delivered, and secondly, by what *evidence* the claim to infallibility is established; we proceed to the third and last topic of investigation, and inquire on what *security* we can rely, that we shall not misunderstand the doctrine propounded to our belief?

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We have already seen that the Romanist is unable to decide with certainty in what person or persons infallibility resides; and that he cannot prove the person or the persons for whom he claims it, namely, a Pope or Council, jointly or severally, to be infallible. Let us next consider, in conclusion, (and the consideration need not occupy us long) whether he is more successful in establishing the third particular, which we began by laying down as necessary to the tranquillization of our minds; whether, in short, it can be proved to us incontestably, that we shall comprehend with clearness and practical certainty the bulls and canons promulgated for our guidance to the truth.

Security on this point is obviously indispensable. The inspired volume is allowed by all Christians to contain unerring rules of Faith and practice. But our erring reason, we are told, is liable to misconceive them. Hence the supposed necessity for another guide. But the very same liability to error which exposes us to mistake in interpreting the Scriptures, exposes us to mistake also in interpreting the bulls of a Pope, or the canons of a

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general Council. God himself inspired his chosen servants to write the Scriptures "for our learning." God nevertheless is misunderstood. Neither Pope nor Council, therefore, is secure from being so. Their decisions, jointly or separately, may be misinterpreted through our weakness of apprehension. We consequently need a new interpreter for expounding their interpretation. But the expositions of this new interpreter may, like those of his unerring predecessors, be erroneously understood ; and thus we should require an infinite series of infallible guides, and at the end of this elaborate process we should not be nearer to infallibility than we found ourselves at the beginning ¹.

Accordingly, we read, without surprise, that there are disputes among Romanists in regard to the right construction of their infallible decrees and canons ; disputes as constant and as vehement as those unhappily subsisting among Protestants, in regard to the meaning of our inspired Scriptures². In the celebrated Council of Trent, the last, and by the Romanists regarded as the greatest ever held, many points of doctrine which had called forth the most violent and argumentative disputation were purposely expressed with ambiguity in the canons, that the consent of all parties might be obtained. Even on that all-important article of faith, respecting the proper object of religious adoration, the Triden-

¹ See Works of Leslie, vol. i. p. 497.

² For an example see Blanco White's Evidence, p. 39.

tine Fathers were satisfied with a vague declaration, that "due worship should be given to images," without informing the conscientious worshipper, (in a strait betwixt the danger of profaneness on one hand and of idolatry on the other,) what kind of worship that doubtful phrase was intended to imply¹. It may be also noticed that there are several controverted points in religion, (the very points, in fact, most frequently contested among Protestants,) on which no unerring oracle has yet pronounced a decision, and on which variations of opinion may be discovered in the papal Church analogous to those prevailing throughout Protestant communions. I allude to the numerous questions connected with election, foreknowledge, predestination, grace, free will, and the perseverance of the Saints².

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Nor will the force of our objections be evaded by the reply that *actual* conformity of faith to the decisions of Popes and Councils is not required; that *intentional* conformity will suffice; and that every man, whatever be his errors and misconceptions, is capable of salvation who is willing and inclined to *believe as the Church believes*³. For if

¹ See Bishop Burnet on the Twenty-second Article.

² For proofs of the divisions here alluded to, see note (U) at the end of the volume, from a very useful work against Romanism, written by the Rev. Joseph Fletcher, M.A.

³ It may here be not inapposite to introduce the well-known example of implicit faith, recorded by various writers, and which has met with different degrees of Roman Catholic praise and of

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the Romanist is willing to believe as his Church believes, the Protestant is willing to believe as the Apostles and Evangelists have believed. If then this willingness will suffice for the Romanist, why should it not be sufficient for the Protestant? If the one, when he falls into error, is held excused by intentional conformity to the Romish creed, why should not intentional conformity to the creed of the Apostles and Evangelists excuse the errors of the other? Let this be granted, and both parties are equally infallible.

Thus we find that in all respects the Romish system fails to afford the religious comfort and security we are endeavouring to acquire. Our well-intentioned Romanist adviser has promised what he proves himself incompetent to perform. He has held out to us the enjoyment of an infallible assurance that we have attained to sound doctrine, if we will only profit by the unerring oracles of his Church; but he cannot point with certainty to the proper organ of infallibility, nor establish on cre-

Protestant censure. An ignorant collier of the Romish persuasion was asked, what it was that he believed, and answered, "I believe what the Church believes." The questioner rejoined: "What then does the Church believe?" He replied: "The Church believes what I believe." The other, anxious for particulars, resumed his interrogatories: "Tell me then, I pray you, what is it that you and the Church both believe?" To which the collier could only give this answer: "Why, truly, Sir, the Church and I both believe the same thing."—Campbell's Lectures, vol. ii. p. 259.

dible evidence the claim of that organ to be infallible ; nor give any positive security that we shall understand infallibly the oracular truths proposed to our assent. On the contrary, we have seen abundant reasons for being morally certain, that the incapability of error which he speaks of has no existence.

DISS. III.

CHAP. I.

CHAPTER II.

DISS. III. **HAVING** parted with our Romish guide, we are
CHAP. II. again in a state of mind to hear, with the same
deliberation as before, the suggestions of any other
counsellor who may undertake to solve our difficulties. No adviser, under the circumstances supposed, is more benevolently willing to come forward, or presents himself with greater confidence to our notice, than the Mystic or Enthusiast¹. As a person peculiarly gifted and instructed, he undertakes at once to be our conductor in the narrow path of sound knowledge. To our inquiries how he proves himself more competent to the task, than many others among our friends of equal piety and ability with himself, he replies by a startling appeal to the highest and most awful of all credentials, —the illumination of the Holy Spirit of God. Not

The Enthusiast.

¹ There seems peculiar necessity in the present time for pointing out in strong terms the unscriptural presumption of fanatical pretensions ; in consequence of certain exhibitions lately before the public, as well in places of religious assembly as of legislative deliberation ; and calculated to make the all-important doctrine of the practical and salutary influences of the Divine Spirit, a subject of infidel derision.

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CHAP. II.

satisfied with affirming, like other men, his pious neighbours, that he has studied the divine word of the Gospel; that he finds the truths which it reveals adapted to his moral constitution; that it leads him to the practice of righteousness “mortifying the deeds of the body, and raising his mind to high and heavenly things”—our mystical teacher assures us, that by the inward workings of the Holy Ghost, he is especially instructed in the whole counsel of God for human salvation; that he is prepared to employ usefully these gifts for the benefit of his fellow Christians; and that he will clear up all our doubts and remove all our difficulties, if we will only hearken with serious attention, and avail ourselves of the opportunities vouchsafed to us.

These lofty pretensions, which amount in fact to the plenitude of infallibility, (and are in no respect inferior to the claims of the Roman Pontiff himself,) would indeed be satisfactory, if our new friend could but establish them on proper evidence. For we might feel ourselves on equal terms with him, as with a private individual; and we might, on all questions in religion, consult him with perfect openness and freedom: whereas his papal rival, living at a distance as a temporal sovereign, either secluded in the recesses of the Vatican, or surrounded by a retinue of cardinals, is wholly inaccessible to personal consultation, except by travellers of the highest rank.

The decided language used by the enthusiast, might with us, as it has done with many, produce

DISS. III. immediate and unconditional acquiescence. His
 CHAP. II. evident sincerity, his real attainments in religion,
 his charitable anxiety for our spiritual welfare, conspire to conciliate our regard, even while we gaze with incredulous astonishment at his boldness. We recollect, however, the principle of caution established by our Divine Saviour, that any claimant of spiritual authority, testifying to his own pretensions, is entitled to no regard till he produce unquestionable evidence in corroboration of his claims. "If I bear witness of myself," says our Lord, "my witness is not true," and he immediately appeals first to the testimony of John the Baptist, an acknowledged prophet; and afterwards, with greater confidence, to the miracles which he himself performed in token of his divine mission and inspiration. "There is another that beareth witness of me, and I know that the witness which He witnesseth of me is true. But I receive not testimony from man.—I have greater witness than that of John; for the works which my Father gave me to finish, the same works that I do, bear witness of me, that the Father hath sent me¹." Upon the principle here promulgated by the blessed Founder of our religion himself, we entreat our mystic counsellor to produce a testimonial from some acknowledged prophet, or the evidence of palpable miracles in attestation of his title to infallibility: otherwise we shall be constrained to answer him

¹ John v. 31. 38.

according to the tenor of the words above quoted, DISS. III.
CHAP. II.
 ‘Thou bearest witness of thyself—thy witness is not true.’

With this request our new adviser is unable to comply. He can produce no evidence but his own individual assertion : yet he complains of our incredulity, and even intimates his sorrowful conviction that, until we have been visited by the same especial and unerring illumination that he himself enjoys, we are incapable of saving knowledge.

Enthusiast
has no evi-
dence to
convince
others.

Shocked at this appalling sentence of prescription, we take occasion to remind our self-satisfied adviser, that we rely on the awakening and sustaining grace of God’s Holy Spirit as implicitly as himself ; that the gift of it is the object of our daily prayers ; and the use of it, the object of our continual endeavours. At the same time we beseech him to consider that numerous individuals, (in all ages of the Church,) laying claim to inward light as confidently as he does, and asserting themselves to be infallible or inspired—have held opinions totally at variance with one another, and have fulminated mutual anathemas. We urge his attention to the solemn apostolic warning “Believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God : because many false prophets are gone out into the world ¹.” We, therefore, repeat our desire to

¹ 1 John iv. 1. “How much soever therefore, the Spirit of God doth influence us in order to the making us believers, this doth not in the least hinder, but that we are to try and examine

DISS. III.

CHAP. II.

know, not so much for ourselves as on his own account, the grounds on which he is so demonstratively convinced that he is in actual possession of the exclusive spiritual endowment which he pretends to.

To this renewed insinuation of our doubts, he replies with unabated confidence, that his case and ours are widely different—that he has no need, like us, to judge of these divine impressions from their effects, but that he perceives and distinguishes, in a manner evident to his senses, the impressions themselves; that he feels the Holy Ghost acting preceptibly in his heart; that he is thus assured of divine illumination by the well known presence of the very Spirit of truth; that he hears as it were the voice of that blessed Spirit within him, explaining to him distinctly all the mysteries of religion; and that, fully conscious of these divine suggestions, he would no more think of doubting their reality than he would doubt the evidence of his own existence¹.

the spirit; that is, to use our utmost skill, and endeavour to find out, whether that spirit that would persuade us to the belief of such and such doctrines, be really from God or no.”—See Archbishop Sharpe’s Sermon on 1 Pet. iii. 15. We may add, on this point, that Servetus, a Spanish physician, who suffered death at Geneva, as a blasphemer, for questioning the doctrine of the Trinity, conceived himself to be inspired.

¹ These representations may appear strongly worded, but it must be evident, that nothing short of the pretensions here advanced can support the claim of the Enthusiast to implicit confidence on the ground of spiritual gifts alone, and without regard to ordinary arguments from Scripture, reason, or antiquity.

Such confident asseverations might almost overcome our incredulity, did we not again call to remembrance the words of our blessed Lord, explaining clearly the nature of spiritual influence, and the utter hopelessness of building, upon sensible impressions, a claim to infallibility. Our Lord assures us, that the operations of the Holy Spirit, though they are real and efficacious, though they are the only source of true holiness in man—are not distinguishable from the operations of the mind itself. He declares that the Holy Spirit is no otherwise to be perceived than in his effects. “The wind bloweth where it listeth and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, nor whither it goeth. So is every one that is born of the Spirit ¹.” We have here an express declaration of him from whom the Holy Ghost proceedeth; of him who alone has a perfect understanding of man’s nature and of God’s; and who alone, therefore, understands the manner in which the Divine Spirit influences the human soul. Instead of describing these spiritual influences as objects of distinct sensation, our Divine Master compares them to currents in the atmosphere, of which the effects are manifest and notorious, though the cause is undiscernible by the senses, and the manner of its operation inexplicable by philosophy ².

We perceive, therefore, that the Enthusiast, claiming to be our guide on the ground of inward sensible

DISS. III.

CHAP. II.

Noevidence
to convince
himself.

¹ John iii. 8.

² See Bishop Horsley’s Sermons.

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CHAP. II.

The Sceptic
 or Latitu-
 dinarian
 merges reli-
 gion in
 moral or
 social duty.

impressions, proceeds upon a principle condemned by the highest of all authorities, namely Christ himself; and that thus having no warrant of infallible inspiration sufficient for his own conviction, he is still less capable of convincing or directing others.

3.—But a third character now presents himself for the removal of our religious anxieties, namely the Sceptic or Latitudinarian, who preaches a doctrine of infallibility very opposite to those we have hitherto been examining. He attempts to prove an impossibility of error, not because there is infallible authority to keep us in the path of orthodox truth; but because there is not the slightest danger to our salvation should we stray from that right path into heresy, or even into unbelief—not because he thinks erroneous views and principles under any guidance to be impossible, but because he thinks that provided our moral conduct in the world be correct, religious views and principles are unimportant; and that to use the phrase of a great poet, “no man can be wrong whose life is in the right.” He insists that the conduct of man towards his fellow-men is all in all; that moral rectitude and usefulness in society, justice, mercy, patriotism, philanthropy, are alone essential to our final welfare; that to be a good citizen, a good father, a good husband, an affectionate kinsman, a charitable neighbour, is to answer all the ends of religion; and that if these ends be answered, we need not much concern ourselves about the means.

To these latitudinarian suggestions various arguments prevent us from assenting. We regard with great distrust the principle of neutrality which he recommends as the panacea for all spiritual distresses. We cannot bring ourselves under his direction to renounce what he would call our prejudices of education, and to consider sound doctrine as being unconnected with moral duty. On the contrary, we look upon indifference to religious truth as an alarming evidence of a bad moral disposition. Piety, as the ablest moralists have observed, is an essential part of moral duty ; not less essential than benevolence or justice. There is an obligation to God, as well as an obligation to our neighbour. Our advocate of liberality rightly condemns the religionist who is full of doctrine and speculation, without regard to his duties in society ; but he forgets that he is himself, in an opposite respect, equally deficient, by disregarding his accountableness to his Maker. If God has given means to man of knowing, serving, and adoring him—man is bound indispensably to employ them by endeavouring, as the first step in a religious life, to ascertain whether God has given a revelation ; and as a second step, to ascertain the truths revealed. The very gift of means for discovering the Divine will presupposes a necessity for using them. A grateful person desires in any case to know the will and character of his benefactor, with an anxious view of discovering the most acceptable method of testifying a sense of kindness received.

DISS. III.

CHAP. II.

This fallacy
replied to.

DISS. III.

CHAP. II.

This moral sentiment of gratitude must rise in proportion to the magnitude and number of the benefits conferred ; and, when called into exercise towards the Author and Giver of all good, ought to be, at all times, the prevailing principle in every well regulated mind. Prudence, likewise, as well as gratitude, is a motive for inquiry, “ what the will of the Lord is.” God is our judge and master, as well as benefactor. Our responsibility to God in this more awful character is by no means a consideration to be trifled with. But this dread responsibility implies, on our part, a necessity for ascertaining, to the utmost of our ability, the laws by which he governs the world ; and by which, at his tribunal, we ourselves must be acquitted or condemned. On these points the judgment of the ablest moralists is unanimous. Even the performance, therefore, of our duties in society and to our neighbour must be influenced by regard to the Supreme will. The absence of this motive vitiates any moral action, however outwardly respectable.

He considers faith independent of the will.

But the Latitudinarian now declares that he does not dispute the importance of religion as well as of moral virtue : he only considers faith as an operation of the mind for which we are not responsible. Belief, he informs us, does not depend upon the will, but depends upon the understanding alone. We can no more, he says, predetermine in what aspect we shall discern truths, than we can predetermine in what light we shall see objects when they are immediately presented to our eyes. As

the colour and form and magnitude of bodies brought within our field of vision must, (independent of our own choice,) regulate our perceptions of sight; so the evidences and arguments and probabilities connected with any doctrine must likewise, independent of our choice, regulate the perceptions of our understanding. If therefore any man is an Atheist, it is because he does not see sufficient proof that there is a God: if any man is a Deist, it is because he does not see sufficient proof of Christianity: if any man is a heretic, it is because he does not understand the meaning of the Christian Scriptures. His unbelief, or his heresy, is a calamity, and not a crime. He takes the evidence as he finds it, and having so found it, he can form no sounder conclusion.

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But here again the defender of doctrinal indifference proceeds on erroneous assumptions. We readily admit, that if, according to his statement, our belief did actually depend upon the understanding alone, we should not then be responsible for our religious principles; but belief, in a great degree, depends also upon the will. We could in no case be required to believe a doctrine for which no sufficient evidence existed; but we may justly and undoubtedly be required, as we value our salvation, to consult the evidence within our reach. If evidence exists, and we pay it no attention, we must abide the consequences: we must answer for our unwillingness to inquire. In our ordinary use of sight we are under no obligation to discern

Reply to
this second
fallacy.

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objects too small or too distant for the human eye, or for our own visual powers : but we are under obligation to see objects brought sufficiently within the compass of our vision ; and for such a purpose it depends upon our will whether or no we open our eyes and direct them towards the proper quarter. Certainly the act of *seeing* is no act of the will ; but the act of *looking* is. It depends, in any case, upon the will to what subjects our thoughts and inquiries shall be directed : it depends upon the will with what degree of diligence, intensity, and perseverance our faculties shall be exercised : it depends upon the will to improve the mind by systematic study and effective meditation, so as to prepare for any labour which requires intellectual energy : it depends, above all, upon the will, in the study of religion, to determine the degree of earnestness and activity with which we shall apply ourselves to the evidences and doctrines of Christianity, by searching the Scriptures, by praying for Divine assistance, and by consulting the various sources of religious instruction among the living or among the dead. True indeed it is, (to pursue the metaphor before introduced,) that the eye placed in some given spot must see an object in a given shape and direction : but it is equally true that the beholder may, at his option, view the object from any other spot whence it is visible ; and may correct erroneous impressions made in the first instance, by a more accurate investigation in the second. Various prejudices and prepossessions make us desire to see intellec-

tual and spiritual objects in an imperfect or distorted light. Pride leads us to reject humiliating doctrines, and to read nothing which would subdue the tone of our self importance. Earthly mindedness inclines us, in the same manner, to turn our thoughts from the heavenly precepts of the Gospel. Various other evil qualities conspire to indispose us for a fair inquiry into the moral duties opposed to our self interest, and incline us to garble the Scriptures, or bring them into satisfactory accordance with our own inclinations. Since then the will is concerned materially in the determination of our faith, our faith has in that respect a moral character. We are responsible for examining impartially, diligently, earnestly, perseveringly, and in all respects to the best of our ability, into the principles of religion. If we fail, from deficiency in any of these respects, the fault is in ourselves.

These conclusions, to which our reason naturally guides us, are confirmed by revelation. The Scriptures are very far from giving sanction to mental indolence, and from encouraging the notion that religious truth is unimportant. They inform us that to "love the truth," to "know the truth," to "receive," and to "abide in" the truth, are essential characteristics of a Christian. They speak of certain heresies by the name of "damnable," as involving those who hold them in condemnation—and they maintain that "without faith it is impossible to please God." Our blessed Lord himself observes of the indisposition for heavenly views,

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which the "evil heart of unbelief" produces among mankind, "This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light because their deeds were evil¹:" and he closed his ministry upon earth with the solemn and awakening declaration, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be damned²."

The conclusion then to which we have been brought by the preceding investigations is briefly this, that contrary to the opinion of the Sceptic the attainment of sound Christian doctrine is indispensably required for our salvation; and yet that no infallible guide to that knowledge can be derived from either of the expedients suggested by the Mystic and by the Romanist.

Resem-
blance
among the
three sys-
tems of In-
fallibility.

The systems recommended by these three parties respectively have one essential point of agreement, namely, their decided tendency to supersede our own personal exertions, for discovering religious

¹ John iii. 19.

² Mark xvi. 16.

It may here be interesting to remark, that the Apostle Paul, when he arraigns the Gentile world for their ignorance of God, makes them responsible for that ignorance on two separate grounds. He distinguishes between the first apostates who introduced idolatry and polytheism, and their descendants who inherited those errors. He condemns the first apostates for *losing* their religious belief, and their descendants for not endeavouring to find or regain it—the former because they did not like to retain God in their knowledge; the latter, because they did not "feel after him and find him."—(Acts xvii. 27. Rom. i. 28.)

truth—the Sceptic by affirming that religious truth is unimportant ; the Mystic by alleging that religious truth is passively received by the mind from divine illumination ; and the Romanist by inculcating an unconditional acquiescence in the dictates of infallible authority¹. This remarkable coincidence suggests the probability that the way of truth may, in respect to our employment of means and opportunities, be the very opposite to the way of error ; that the right path to saving knowledge may not consist in the *disuse*, but in the *strenuous exertion* of our intellectual and moral faculties ; that the inclination to improve our advantages for attaining spiritual information may be designed to try our moral character² ; and that our best security

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Right path
to saving
knowledge.

¹ “Certainly every man considering that his eternal salvation lies upon it, will be enforced to apply sincerity and care in his own behalf ; whereas if others interpret for him, they may do it more remissly or more fraudulently.”—*Works of Hen. More*, p. 454.

“As the case stands in religion, according to the Roman Catholic doctrine, reason, and thinking, and studying, and examination, and industry, and search, though they be necessary tools to be made use of for the putting a man into good hands, yet after he is in those hands, he is to throw all these things away, and never after to make use of them. Doth this look like a doctrine of God ? No, certainly.”—Archbishop Sharpe’s *Sermons*, vol. vii. p. 29.

² “Nor does there appear any absurdity in supposing that the speculative difficulties in which the evidence of religion is involved, may make even the principal part of some persons’ trial. For, as the chief temptations of the generality of the world, are the ordinary motives to injustice or unrestrained pleasure ; or to live in

DISS. III. from deadly heresy may consist in certain prom-
 CHAP. II. mises to be found in Scripture, that our sincere

the neglect of religion from that frame of mind, which renders many persons almost without feeling as to any thing distant, or which is not the object of their senses ; so there are other persons without this shallowness of temper, persons of a deeper sense as to what is invisible and future, who not only see, but have a general practical feeling, that what is to come will be present, and that things are not less real for their not being the objects of sense ; and who, from their natural constitution of body and of temper, and from their external condition, may have small temptations to behave ill, small difficulty in behaving well, in the common course of life. Now, when these latter persons have a distinct full conviction of the truth of religion, without any possible doubts or difficulties, the practice of it is to them unavoidable, unless they will do a constant violence to their own minds ; and religion is scarce any more a discipline to them, than it is to creatures in a state of perfection. Yet these persons may possibly stand in need of moral discipline and exercise, in a higher degree than they would have by such an easy practice of religion. Or it may be requisite, for reasons unknown to us, that they should give some further manifestation, what is their moral character, to the creation of God, than such a practice of it would be. Thus in the great variety of religious situations in which men are placed, what constitutes, what chiefly and peculiarly constitutes, the probation, in all senses, of some persons, may be the difficulties in which the evidence of religion is involved ; and their principal and distinguished trial may be, how they will behave under, and with respect to, these difficulties. Circumstances in men's situation in their temporal capacity, analogous in good measure to this respecting religion, are to be observed. We find some persons are placed in such a situation in the world, as that their chief difficulty, with regard to conduct, is not the doing what is prudent when it is known, for this, in numberless cases, is as easy as the contrary ; but to some, the principal exercise is, re-

endeavours after truth shall be assisted by the direction of Divine Providence, and the co-operation of Divine grace.

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Such promises are numerous both in the Old and New Testament. To bring forward the whole of them would be to transcribe a great portion of the Bible. A selection however, of the most remarkable, can hardly fail of proving satisfactorily to the most anxious mind—how often, and how solemnly the God of all consolation has pledged himself for the success of every aspirant after saving truth, who is not morally disqualified for the pursuit by love of sin, by indolence, by worldly mindedness, or by insincerity.—“The secret of the Lord,” observes the Psalmist, “is with them that fear him, and he will show them his covenant¹.” “I will inform thee, and teach thee, in the way thou shalt go; and I will guide thee with mine eye².” “Good and upright is the Lord, therefore will he teach sinners in the way: the meek will he guide in judgment: and to the meek he will teach his way³.” “What man is he that feareth the Lord? him shall he teach in the way that he shall choose.

Encouraging promises of Scripture.

collection, and being upon their guard against deceits, the deceits, suppose, of those about them; against false appearances of reason and prudence. To persons in some situations, the principal exercise, with respect to conduct, is attention in order to inform themselves what is proper, what is really the reasonable and prudent part to act.”—Apology of Bishop Butler, pp. 285, 286.

¹ Psalm xxv. 14.

² Ps. xxxii. 8.

³ Ps. xxv. 8, 9.

DISS. III. His soul shall dwell at ease¹.” The declarations
 CHAP. II. of Solomon are to the same animating effect. “My
 son, if thou wilt receive my words, and hide my
 commandments with thee, so that thou incline thine
 ear to wisdom, and apply thine heart to under-
 standing ; if thou criest after knowledge, and liftest
 up thy voice for understanding ; if thou seekest her
 as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasures ;
 then shalt thou understand the fear of the Lord,
 and find the knowledge of God².—Trust in the
 Lord with all thine heart, and lean not unto thine
 own understanding ; in all thy ways acknowledge
 him, and he shall direct thy paths³.—The mouth
 of the just bringeth forth wisdom : the lips of the
 righteous know what is acceptable⁴.”

Proceeding to the Scriptures of the New Testa-
 ment, we derive peculiar encouragement from the
 emphatic assurance conveyed by St. James : “If
 any of you lack wisdom” (the very case we are now
 supposing) “let him ask of God that giveth to all
 men liberally, and upbraideth not : and it shall be
 given him⁵.” In St. Paul’s epistle to the Philip-
 pians, a passage occurs, which though translated
 somewhat obscurely, is valuably apposite to our
 present purpose. “Let us as many as be perfect,”
 says he, “be thus minded, and if in any thing ye
 be otherwise” (or variously) “minded, God shall

¹ Ps. xxv. 12, 13. ² Prov. li. 1—5. ³ Prov. iii. 5, 6.

⁴ Prov. x. 31, 32. ⁵ James i. 5.

reveal this unto you;" that is, shall reveal the thing respecting which ye are variously minded¹: so that if any well-disposed inquirer be in error, he will be led, in the conscientious improvement of his means and opportunities, to a perception of the truth. The promises of our Divine Redeemer are clear and explicit in the most encouraging degree. "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you: for every one that asketh, receiveth; and he that seeketh, findeth; and to him that knocketh, it shall be opened. Or what man is there of you, whom if his son ask bread, will he give him a stone? Or if he ask a fish, will he give him a serpent? If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in Heaven, give good things to them that ask him²?" In another passage he declares expressly, that the knowledge of religious truth shall invariably reward the labours of the humble and diligent individual, who, from desire to do the will of God, conscientiously exerts himself to know it. "If any man will do" (*θέλει ποιεῖν* or is desirous to do) "his will, he shall know of the doctrine whether it be of God³."

¹ See Horsley's Sermons, vol. ii.

² Matt. vii. 7. 12.

³ "This text," says Bishop Taylor, in a sermon on the declaration of our Lord above quoted, "is simple as truth itself. It will enable you to understand all mysteries, and to expound all prophecies, and to interpret all Scriptures, and to search into all secrets—all, I mean, that involve our happiness and our duty.

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In the greater number of these Scriptural promises an important peculiarity arrests our attention. They appear to assure us, on the authority of God himself, that every individual shall attain the knowledge necessary to his salvation, who strenuously uses *any one* method for attaining it, even though he should neglect every other. To fear God ; to reverence his word ; to lay up his commandments as our treasure ; to cultivate meekness—to incline

He that goes about to speak of, and to understand the mysterious Trinity, and does it by words and names of man's invention, and by such which signify contingently ; if he reckons this mystery by the mythology of numbers, by the cabala of letters, by the distinctions of the schools, and by the weak inventions of disputing people ; if he only talks of essences, and existences, hypostasies and personalities, distinctions without difference, and priority in co-equalities, and unity in pluralities, and of superior predicates of no larger extent than the inferior subjects ;—he may amuse himself, and find his understanding will be like St. Peter's upon the Mount of Tabor at the Transfiguration : he may build three tabernacles in his head, and talk something, but he knows not what. But the good man that feels the power of the Father, and to whom the Son is become wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption ; he in whose heart the love of the Spirit of God is spread, to whom God hath communicated the Holy Ghost the Comforter ;—this man, though he understands nothing of that which is unintelligible, yet he only understands the mysteriousness of the Holy Trinity. No man can be convinced well and wisely of the article of the holy, blessed, and undivided Trinity, but he that feels the mightiness of the Father begetting him to a new life ; the wisdom of the Son building him up in a most holy faith ; and the love of the Spirit of God making him to become like unto God."—Sermons of Bishop Taylor, vol. vi. p. 402.

our ears and hearts unto wisdom ; to pray for and search after it ; to trust in the giver of it—to be just, to be righteous, to be humble-minded ; to ask ; to seek ; to knock at the gate of mercy—lastly, to be desirous of doing, and consequently of knowing the will of God : each of these various methods for the discovery of saving knowledge, is represented as being separately, and in itself sufficient. But there is nothing inconsistent throughout these statements. The promises annexed to the right use of any one mode are not intended to disparage the importance, or supersede the necessity, of employing the remainder. Each of them, rightly understood and rightly exercised, presupposes the employment of the others. For example, every man who prays to God for wisdom on right principles, and from a predominant desire of becoming “wise unto salvation,” will, necessarily, under the influence of that desire, exert the other means within his reach for the attainment of the same all-absorbing object. His studies and his practice will be conformable to his prayer. Or again, if from the same predominant desire he applies himself to meditation on the pages of inspired truth, he must, (in obedience to this governing principle,) cultivate devotion, meekness, justice, humility. His whole life must be consistent with his meditations.

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We may here make a passing remark, that this form of delivering instruction, by promising to each specific exercise of a general principle the reward

These promises given in a manner not unusual in Scripture.

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intended for the practice of it universally, is not unusual in the sacred volume. Not to mention other numerous instances, our Saviour himself, in his sermon on the Mount, adopts with great advantage this custom. Speaking of blessedness, or the enjoyment of Divine favour, he ascribes it separately and successively to almost every individual virtue. The heavenly-minded ; the penitent or spiritual mourners ; the meek ; the aspirants after righteousness ; the merciful ; the pure in heart ; the peace-makers ; the persecuted for righteousness sake ; are separately and successively pronounced to be "blessed." The reason is obvious. Every man who on truly Christian principles is merciful, or meek, will, on the same principles, be pure in heart. In likemanner every true Christian, who is "pure in heart," will be heavenly-minded, penitent, meek, merciful, and a promoter of peace. So also every Christian "peace-maker" will, consistently with his ruling motive, (namely, the love of Christ,) be pure in heart ; will be an aspirant after righteousness ; and will, for righteousness sake, submit even to persecution.

The several instructions to which, accordingly, the promise of saving knowledge is given, must be considered as being similarly introduced with the virtues to which our Lord in his sermon annexes blessedness. From the promises subjoined to each of these instructions, we are taught to infer the moral certainty of success in the observance of them all.

The principle which we have now established is not to be confounded with those fallacies which we have been endeavouring to expose. We do not call it infallibility, because we readily admit that rectitude of opinion may exist, in various degrees, among persons, all of whom are in the path of salvation. It differs from infallibility as maintained by Romanists, because we do not consider any individual, nor any number of individuals, to be incapable of error. It differs from the infallibility of the Enthusiast, because we lay no claim to exemption from mistake : we insist only that, using faithfully the means at our disposal, we shall escape unpardonable heresy. We contend that saving truth may be attained in various degrees. Whereas absolute inspiration in each inspired individual, admits of no degrees nor differences : it must be perfect, regular, and invariable : all must think alike. Our principle differs, thirdly, from the infallibility of the Sceptic, because he conceives all doctrines equally excellent, provided their operation in society adapts itself to his confined notions of moral duty. Whereas our method implies that one doctrine differs materially, as to inherent excellence, from another, and that we are therefore bound to select the best.

To make this selection of what is best, must be the paramount desire of every rightly-disposed mind : and it now only remains for us, before concluding this dissertation, to give some rules, as

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Difference
of this
Scriptural
principle
from the
three pre-
ceding.

DISS. III. briefly as we can, for determining our choice.
 CHAP. II. Error and misconception on this subject are so lamentably common, that even our few imperfect suggestions may not be useless nor unacceptable. We shall only premise that the spiritual exercises which we recommend are arranged in the order here given them, with a view to convenience and clearness; and not from an impression that any of our readers can have occasion to begin from the commencement of the series.

Rules for
acquiring
sound
Christian
knowledge.

1. Our first rule is : to employ all the strength of our faculties in the study and investigation of natural religion : till we become impressed sincerely and practically with our awful responsibility, as reasonable beings, to our Creator, Benefactor, and Judge eternal.

2. To establish clearly in our minds the evidences and principles of Revelation ; and to ascertain, by diligent inquiry, that the Scriptures “ given for our learning,” are “ given by inspiration of God ; and are profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, and instruction in righteousness¹. ”

3. To acquire a persuasion (according to the principle asserted in the Scriptures, maintained by all antiquity, and revived by Protestants) that the pages of revelation are not “ a sealed book ” to us ; but that we are entitled to “ search the Scriptures², ” to “ prove all things³, ” and “ to be ready

¹ 2. Tim. iii.

² John v. 39.

³ 1 Thess. v. 21.

always to give an answer to every man that asketh us a reason of the hope that is in us¹.”

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4. To satisfy ourselves that, on points of Christian doctrine, our only real standard of faith is the Bible; and that tradition, (however useful as its interpreter and guardian,) is not, as Romanists contend, a co-ordinate authority with the sacred text².

5. To use in our interpretation of the inspired volume all the helps within our reach; whether spiritual or temporal; whether deriveable from the living or from the dead. Among these helps, it seems superfluous to remind a Christian reader of two most important and most indispensable aids already mentioned; namely, prayer and a holy life. To these may be added others equally obvious so far as they are consistent with the opportunities, station, or profession of the individual—such as familiarity with Scripture in the original, knowledge of history, and particularly of the manners, laws, customs, and opinions of antiquity, Jewish as well as Christian; joined to acquaintance with sound principles of biblical interpretation, criticism, and translation.

But a point which more particularly seems, under

¹ 1 Pet. iii. 15. See for authorities on this head, Note (V) at the end of the volume.

² For proofs and illustrations of this point, drawn from Irenæus, Tertullian, Hippolytus, Cyprian, Cyril of Jerusalem, Athanasius, Jerome, Basil, and Augustin, see note (W) at the end of the volume.

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this rule, to require illustration, is the *degree of value* at which the conscientious inquirer after sound religious knowledge ought to estimate ecclesiastical antiquity. Many pious individuals, (in their well-meant zeal against Romish errors,) have thought themselves obliged to discard ecclesiastical antiquity, under a persuasion that by attaching any value to ancient writers, they would violate the great Protestant axiom of resting on the sole authority of God's written word.

But it should be considered, that to use ecclesiastical antiquity for interpreting the word of God, no more violates this axiom than to use any of the other universally admitted aids to interpretation already mentioned. Whatever means the Divine promulgator of Revelation has given to his Church for ascertaining the truths revealed, ought diligently and conscientiously to be improved. We cannot better explain how far ancient literature is to be rendered available to sacred purposes than by a transcription of a canon set forth by the Church of England in the same year with its articles. "Preachers shall not presume to deliver anything from the pulpit as of moment, to be *religiously* observed and believed by the people, but that which is agreeable to the doctrine of the Old or New Testament, and collected out of the same doctrine by the Catholic Fathers and the Bishops of the ancient Church ¹." "A wise regulation,"

¹ *Imprimis vero, videbunt* (Concionatores) *ne quid unquam*

observes the judicious and able Dr. Waterland, “formed with exquisite judgment, and worded with the exactest caution. The canon does not order that they shall teach whatever had been taught by the Fathers : no ; that would have been setting up a new rule of faith : neither does it say that they shall teach *whatsoever* the Fathers had *collected from Scripture* : no ; that would have been making them *infallible* interpreters, or *infallible reasoners* : the doctrine must be found first in Scripture, only to be the more secure that we have found it there : the *Fathers* are to be called in, to be, as it were, constant checks upon the presumption or wantonness of private interpretation. But then again, as to *private* interpretation, there is liberty enough allowed to it. Preachers are not forbidden to interpret this or that text, or hundreds of texts, differently from what the Fathers have done ; provided still they keep within the *analogy of faith*, and presume not to raise any *new* doctrine : neither are they altogether restrained from teaching anything *new*, provided it be offered as opinion only, or as an *inferior* truth, and not pressed as necessary upon the people. For it was thought that there could be no *necessary* article of faith or doctrine now drawn from Scripture, but what the ancients had drawn out before from the same Scripture : to

doceant pro concione, quod a populo religiosè teneri et credi velint, nisi quod consentaneum sit doctrinæ veteris aut novi testamenti : quodque ex illâ ipsâ doctrinâ Catholici Patres et veteres Episcopi collegerint.—Sparrow, Collect. p. 238.

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CHAP. I 1.
say otherwise would imply that the ancients had failed universally in *necessaries*, which is morally absurd¹." The canon thus explained may be thought appropriate to preachers and ministers alone, exclusively of their people: but though the latter cannot, it is true, directly apply this regulation to themselves, they nevertheless may indirectly derive advantage from it. They will be prepared to perceive at once when any minister proposes to their acceptance some doctrine or exposition of Scripture, for which he can produce no ancient authority—and which he declares to be *new*, yet at the same time *important*—he declares himself, by this dangerous and uncanonical proceeding, unworthy of their confidence.

Concluding
exhortation

But perhaps the greatest and most alarming mistake to be avoided by all inquirers, ecclesiastical or laical, is the application of their minds to religious researches rather for the sake of curious information and philosophical entertainment, than for purposes of saving knowledge, and of sure, efficacious, practical direction. The Holy Scriptures, no doubt, are written for our learning, not however merely for such learning as consists in literary, critical, and speculative exercises of our

¹ See chap. vii. of Dr. Waterland's *Treatise on the Importance of the Doctrine of the Trinity*; where the use of ecclesiastical antiquity is discussed with his usual masterly erudition and ability. Similar observations in an abridged form may be found in his introduction to a review of the *Doctrine of the Eucharist*. See Vol. vii. of his works, edited by the Bishop of Durham.

ingenuity ; but for our advancement in the school of Christian wisdom, of that wisdom from above which unites and perfects all the higher capacities of our nature, moral, intellectual, or spiritual—that wisdom which, (far removed from the jealousies and the wranglings, and the violences of factious controversy,) is anxious only for the interests of truth and virtue—that wisdom which is “first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated ; full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy ¹.”

In this course of wise and holy discipline, according to our diligence, will be our progress ; and proportioned to our progress, will be our reward. Our anxieties, discouragements, and despondencies will be left behind us. We shall go on our way rejoicing. We shall feel a personal interest in the glorious system of Christian redemption. We shall enter daily more and more with satisfaction upon the duty of examining ourselves, “whether we be in the faith ² :” and the result of that examination will more and more enable us to see distinctly within our hearts the lineaments of the Christian character. All the tests from Scripture of such a progress will have a clearer application to our spiritual state. Love to God, charity to mankind, preference of divine to merely human objects, fervency in prayer, frequency in meditation, attachment to religious ordinances, self-control in the

¹ 1 James iii. 17.² 2 Cor. xiii. 5.

DISS. III. subjugation of our appetites and passions ; and in
 CHAP. II. one word, likeness to Christ, increasing from day
 to day—will assure us that to reach the gate of salvation we have only to preserve the path which we have chosen. And although, in this advanced state, enjoying “ a full assurance of faith and hope ¹,” we relax nothing of our efforts, and, like St. Paul, “ count not ourselves to have apprehended the price of our high calling ²,” yet we exclaim triumphantly with the same Apostle : “ Who shall separate us from the love of Christ ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword ? In all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord ³.”

¹ Heb. vi. 11. x. 22.

² Phil. iii. 13.

³ Rom. viii. 35—39.

DISSERTATION IV.

ON MEDIATION.

"I believe that the appointment of a Mediator is the great mystery and perfect centre of all God's ways with his creatures; and unto which all his other works and wonders do but serve and refer."

"That Jesus the Lord became in the flesh a sacrificer and a sacrifice for sin; a satisfaction and price to the justice of God; a meriter of glory and the kingdom; a pattern of all righteousness; a preacher of the word which himself was; a finisher of the ceremony; a corner-stone to remove the separation between Jew and Gentile; an intercessor for the Church; a Lord of nature in his miracles; a conqueror of death and the power of darkness in his resurrection; and that he fulfilled the whole counsel of God, performing all his sacred offices; and anointing on earth, accomplished the whole work of the redemption and restitution of man, to a state superior to the angels, (whereas the state of man by creation was inferior,) and reconciled and established all things according to the eternal will of the Father."—*Lord Bacon's Works*, fol. vol. iv. pp. 115, 116.

"Man must have remained obnoxious to eternal punishment, if there had not been distinct persons in the Godhead; one of whom, in transcendent love to mankind, being pleased to take our nature upon him, might make atonement and satisfaction to the other, for the injury done to Divine justice."—*Tucker's Light of Nature*, ch. 17.

"So far as our attention is directed to the standard of exact propriety and perfection, the wisest and best of us, all can in his own character and conduct, see nothing but weakness and imperfection; can discover no ground for arrogance and presumption, but a great deal for humility, regret, and repentance."—*Adam Smith's Moral Sentiments*, part vi. sect. 3.

PREVIOUS to the great era of the Reformation, the discussion of many questions on the subject of religion was prevented or kept down, and outward uniformity in some measure maintained throughout all the western churches of Christendom, by the strong superincumbent pressure of a supposed infallible authority. On the removal of this confining

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State of religious opinion at the Reformation.

DISS. IV. force, there arose, as might naturally be expected, a sudden and universal burst of multifarious opinions, which dispersed themselves in innumerable fragments over Europe. While the efforts of wise and pious men were, by the good providence of God, successful in their great work of reconstruction and consolidation, and in regulating the movements of emancipated reason by rules of Scripture :—there would necessarily remain much in these elements of the reformed system, that was perverse, licentious, and untractable. Among these wayward parties, none seem to have been more conspicuously opposed to the truth, or to one another, than two descriptions of them who have received the general name of Socinians and Antinomians.—A slight historical introduction respecting these two sects will show their intimate connexion with the important subject of the present dissertation.

Origin of
Socinian-
ism.

Historical
view.

The individuals who have supplied a name to what is called Socinianism were **LÆLIUS SOCINUS**, and his nephew **FAUSTUS**, descendants of an illustrious family, the Sozzini, of Sienna, in Tuscany. The uncle left Italy in 1547, possessed with the general hatred then prevailing against the tyranny of Rome, and desirous, by visiting France, England, Holland, and Germany, to examine the religious sentiments of the reformed Churches. He adopted at one time the Helvetic confession, and became a member of the Church of Switzerland. But beginning to indulge his speculative fancy in dangerous conjectures (respecting the Divinity of Christ, the

doctrine of Atonement, and the personality of the Holy Spirit) he found it necessary to seek a final asylum in Poland, at that time the only country which had practically embraced the principles of toleration. He committed his peculiarities to writing; but never made them public through the press. On his death in 1562, these papers came into the possession of Faustus. The latter, adopting the speculations of his uncle, propagated them with so much zeal and talent, as to unite into one society various scattered sectaries, who, like himself, had taken refuge under the shelter of Polish liberty. These several parties, opposed on various grounds to the doctrine of the Trinity, first received from this leader an organized and apparently consistent form. They acquired further importance from the patronage of Jo. Siennienius, Palatine of Podolia, who, becoming a convert to their tenets, presented them with a settlement in a city which he had recently built under the name of Racow. They published a revised translation of the Bible, accommodated as far as it was practicable, with their miscellaneous views. They afterwards compiled their celebrated Racovian catechism, which, (though differing essentially from the secret principles of its professors and framers,) was received as their confession of faith, and being expressed in terms as little obnoxious to protestant Christendom as could be devised, it was circulated throughout Europe ¹.

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¹ A Latin translation of the Racovian Catechism was presented

DISS. IV.

Another circumstance which gave notoriety to this new sect was the martyrdom, as we may term it, of Michael Servetus, a Spanish physician of some eminence, who, under an idea of inspiration, had put forth a doctrine of the Trinity making some approaches to Socinianism. Our readers will probably remember, that this unhappy man, travelling through Geneva, was seized upon and burnt as a blasphemer at the instigation of Calvin, who does not seem to have adopted the principles of religious liberty then exemplified in Poland.

The progress of Socinianism in Great Britain was for some time tardy and uncertain: though the progress of its professors towards Deism was more openly avowed, and more rapid than on the Continent. By far the ablest of them was a man whose philosophical celebrity would have given lustre to any party, civil or religious. Priestley went so far even as to maintain opinions for which a learned Polish Doctor (Budnæus) was, in 1584, publicly excommunicated from the Socinian society at Racow above alluded to. The English philosopher, while he acknowledged the heavenly mission of Christ, regarded him as a mere human being, the son of Mary and of Joseph: consequently, like Budnæus, he disclaimed all worship of our Divine Redeemer. Socinian principles have like-

to King James I. and another copy to the University of Wittenburgh. See Mosheim. Hist. Eccles. vol. iv. chap. iv. sect. 3. part 2.

wise made considerable advancement through gradual defection, as well of ministers, as of whole congregations, from the old Presbyterian body of English dissenters. DISS. IV.

Such is the origin of Socinianism historically narrated. Moral view Morally considered, it presents a somewhat different aspect. Persons addicted to abstract speculation and deistically inclined, could hardly fail of perceiving great deficiencies in natural religion. Moral principles might be inculcated, but moral principles wanted adequate sanction. They required some additional authority which would bring them home to the hearts and consciences of men. The doctrines of universal judgment and retribution in another life might, by the light of nature, be rendered extremely probable, but could not thoroughly nor satisfactorily be established; while the resurrection of the body could not be maintained at all. In this dilemma the partisans of Deism had no resource, but to accept revelation with a view of strengthening and enforcing their moral system. At the same time, the religion of Christ contained many other doctrines which were not compatible with deistical inclinations or purposes; doctrines alike unwelcome to the proud supremacy of human reason, and to the arrogance of human virtue. Christianity therefore was adopted so far as its sanctions were useful, and rejected so far as its doctrines were humiliating.

The Socinian creed, (as may be supposed from the diversity of its professions,) is of very comprehensive

DISS. IV. latitude. On one principle, however, all agree ; namely, that our Lord Jesus Christ is not “ our High Priest to reconcile us with the Father by the sacrifice of himself¹. ”

Origin of
Antinomi-
anism.

About the same time with the Socinians arose an opposite sect, the Antinomians, the tendency of whose doctrines was not to strengthen moral obligation, but rather to relax and weaken it. The first introducer of this system, at the period of the Reformation, was JOHN AGRICOLA, a native of Germany, and an eminent doctor in the Lutheran Church. When Luther was opposing the Romanists, who maintained “ Justification by Works,” this sectary seems to have taken some overstrained expressions of Luther in a literal sense. He declaimed against “ the Law,” maintaining that it was not a rule of Christian life, nor a proper means of instruction ; and that “ the Gospel ” only was to be taught among Christians : hence the name of Antinomians, or enemies of the law. Agricola is thought by some writers to have been misunderstood. He is represented by Mosheim as meaning by the term Law only the Mosaic precepts, including the ten commandments, which he considered as a code enacted for the Jews, and not for Christians ; while by “ the Gospel ” he understood not merely the doctrine of an atoning Saviour, but the rules of righteousness which he enjoined. Whatever may have been the actual opinions of Agricola, the more obnoxious

¹ Hebrews ix. 26. x. 21.

and really licentious tenets ascribed to him were successfully disseminated under various forms over Europe, and more especially in England, during the Protectorate of Cromwell.

Antinomianism then, like Socinianism, is an appellative admitting great latitude of application¹. Every class of persons who cherish principles diminishing the authority of the Divine Law and the obligations of moral duty, may be regarded as Antinomians. They all unite, (whatever may be their shades of difference on other points,) in discarding Christ as a prophet whose moral lessons they are bound to receive, and as a king whose commandments they are bound to obey. Viewed in this light, Antinomianism is of great antiquity.

¹ "Low and illiterate sects interpret Scripture without regard to the *circumstances* of those for whom it was most immediately intended; for it is learning which lets us into those circumstances. Now, whenever any ancient writing is so interpreted, it must be interpreted too literally; without any of those limitations or additions, which, in things familiar to us, we make by means of our feelings and common sense. The Scripture, thus interpreted, contradicts itself frequently, and so must the doctrines of literal interpreters: we may, on this account, always expect to find great *confusion* and inconsistency amongst them. And as they have no precise ideas, and therefore no creeds, catechisms, confessions of faith, nor any ecclesiastical history, their doctrines will be unsteady; and sects will ramify and mix imperceptibly, keeping the same names in such a manner as to elude all regular and systematical investigation. Without such a previous remark as this, the thinking man might be disappointed with the best accounts that can be given of Antinomians, Anabaptists, &c."—Hey's Lectures, book iv. art. vii. sect. iii. pp. 37, 38.

DISS. IV. Many ancient heretics, Carpocrates for one, entertained immoral notions of the kind alluded to. This Gnostic teacher carried to the worst and vilest possible extreme the Antinomian principles, maintaining that eternal salvation was only “attainable by those who had committed all sorts of crimes, and had daringly filled up the measure of iniquity¹.” Between Carpocrates and the less advanced and more modern disciples of the same school our readers will perceive a space sufficient to include a multitude of persons holding sentiments infinitely various. It will be convenient, for the purposes of this essay, to express them all by one common term. And in the same manner as we considered any person a Socinian, who opposes the *atonement* of Christ, so we take the similar liberty of considering any person, of whatever additional denomination, an Antinomian, who opposes the *law* of Christ, or his spiritual government, in the hearts and lives of men.

Carpocra-
tes.

Having thus attempted a short introductory history, in explanation of these two principles of error, we may next proceed to their Scriptural refutation. We say *Scriptural*, because both parties, to be Christians at all, must admit the Scriptures to be the standard of religious truth by which all doctrines are to be tried. The Deist, therefore, who,

¹ See Iren. *Contra Heres.* cap. xxv. Clemen. Alex. *Stromat.* lib. iii. p. 511. quoted by Mosheim, vol. i. cant. ii. part ii. p. 228.

from respect to public opinion, would shield himself behind the mask of Socinianism, must be sensible that to assume even that remote semblance of Christianity, he must admit the authority of the word of God. DISS. IV.

To proceed then with our argument by a definition of the term prefixed to this essay. Mediation necessarily implies two parties at variance, whom the mediator interposes to reconcile. He must for this purpose have authority to act for both ; so that neither of them may have any pretext for withdrawing from his decision ¹. Statement
of the ques-
tion.

The Christian scheme is built on this foundation. God and man are at variance. Christ interposes to reconcile them. He is invested with authority to act in behalf of both ; and as God is not disposed, so man is not entitled to withdraw from the decisions of this authorized Mediator.

Holding this important office Christ is variously designated. Mediating for God, he is called a King, a Judge, a Prophet ; mediating for man, he

¹ This definition may serve to explain a somewhat obscure passage in St. Paul's Epistle to the Galatians, chap. iii. v. 20. where the Apostle declares, that *a Mediator is not a Mediator of one* : that is, not a Mediator for one party only. This construction of St. Paul's words is supported by various authorities, Arminian as well as Calvinistic, both within and without the Church.—See Commentaries of Locke, Doddridge, Thomas Scott, and John Wesley in loc. : also John Scott in his "Christian Life," part ii. chap. vii. p. 341. I omit other foreign divines not generally familiar to the English reader.

DISS. IV. is styled a Priest, an Advocate, an Intercessor. Acting for God, he undertakes to re-establish the Divine authority upon earth, by recalling us to our allegiance : acting for man, he undertakes to secure our everlasting happiness, by obtaining from God our restoration to favour. This arrangement, which removes “ the enmity ” subsisting between God and man, is called the Gospel covenant or agreement.

From the nature of this covenant it sufficiently appears, that Christ, our Mediator, is not an agent for one party only. He is entrusted with the interests of both. Many Christians, however, in all ages of the Church, have taken partial and therefore most erroneous views of the subject. Two extremes of opinion, already adverted to, have divided the Christian world. On the one side it has not been sufficiently considered that the Mediator acts for man, as well as God : on the other side, it has with equal impropriety been forgotten, that the Mediator acts for God as well as man. On the one side is ranged the Socinian ; on the other the Antinomian. The one excludes the Mediator from the priesthood, or, in other words, from interposing with God to secure human salvation ; the other excludes the Mediator from his kingly office, that is, from interposing with man to secure the Divine authority. According to the one, Christ is only a Ruler ; according to the other, only an Advocate. The one overlooks his appointment to *intercede* ; the other his appointment to *legislate*. Both overlook his *mediation*.

To examine and expose these two errors respectively, shall be the purpose of the present dissertation. They are errors upon a subject of the last importance. For the Christian religion consists essentially and entirely in the doctrines relating to the Mediator, and the duties arising from those doctrines. If we neglect those duties, or misconceive those doctrines, our religion, however plausible or imposing as a system of theology or of morals, is not Christianity. And whatever we may suppose with respect to heathens, whose ignorance is unavoidable, we may rest assured, on the authority of Scripture, that no man who has Christian knowledge within his reach, has any prospect of salvation, without embracing fully and distinctly the faith in Christ. Ignorance in our case must be wilful. Misconception in our case can result only from sinful prejudice, or from sinful neglect¹.

We shall begin then with the error of the Socinians. We shall take the case of those who, making Christ, contrary to the essential character of a Mediator, an agent for one party only, regard him merely as God's Mediator with us. They acknowledge Christ as a King, a Prophet, a Legislator, a Judge; they reject him as a Priest, an

Error of the
Socinians.

¹ The reader, it is hoped, will at once perceive the reason why mediation is the only doctrine of our Church, selected for discussion in the present work. It is a doctrine so comprehensive as to include every other, and one which, if sufficiently understood and cordially embraced, must lead to general acquiescence in the articles of the Church of England.

DISS. IV. Advocate, an Intercessor. They wisely desire the aid of his authority and the sanction of his law for enforcing moral duties ; but they proudly reject the benefits of his atoning sacrifice. And wherefore this rejection ? Why accept a mediator in the one sense, and refuse him in the other ? Wherefore such inconsistency ? This question we shall at once proceed to answer ; because, in discovering the foundations of a false opinion, we make a necessary step towards discovering wherein the fallacy lies.

These refusers then, of Christ for their Advocate, either imagine that they need no Advocate with God ; that God is not so estranged from them as to require interposition in their favour ; that their own righteousness, independent of any advocate to recommend it, is sufficiently acceptable to God : or they imagine that sin is amply atoned for by repentance ; and that subsequent amendment is abundant compensation for previous disobedience.

In this apology for Socinianism there are two statements, one of which asserts, that, independent of a mediator, human virtue is all sufficient ; and the other that repentance is all-sufficient. We shall examine these two statements in succession.

Necessity of
a Mediator
in conse-
quence of
human de-
pravity.

With respect to the first of them, which asserts the all-sufficiency of human virtue—whoever consults attentively the Scriptures, will find in almost every page a refutation of that erroneous notion. The nature of man is there pronounced to be deeply stained with hereditary corruption. We read that

man is "conceived and born in sin¹," that the imagination of the thoughts of his heart is only evil "continually²," that to the question "Who can say, I have made my heart clean, I am pure from my sin³?" the only answer is, that "all have sinned⁴," that "in many things we all offend⁵," that even the "just man falleth seven times a day⁶," that the whole world "is guilty before God⁷," and "lieth in wickedness⁸:" and that "the heart of man is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked⁹." This inherent depravity is explained. "God made man upright, but he sought out to himself many inventions¹⁰." "By one man sin came into the world, and death by sin, so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned¹¹." "By the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation¹²." In these circumstances, a restoration or renewal of the human character became indispensable for obtaining renewed access to the presence of the Divine Majesty.

DISS. IV.

Proved
from Scrip-
ture.

These strong statements of Holy Scripture with respect to human depravity, are supported and borne out by history, by experience, and by the universal suffrages of mankind themselves. The tendency of the human heart to evil is pre-supposed in all systems of religion, in all forms of government, and in all plans of education. The

Proved
from history
and expe-
rience.¹ Psalm li. 5.² Gen. vi. 5.³ Prov. xx. 9.⁴ Rom. iii. 23.⁵ James iii. 2.⁶ Prov. xxiv. 16.⁷ Rom. iii. 19.⁸ 1 John v. 19.⁹ Jer. xvii. 9.¹⁰ Eccles. vii. 29.¹¹ Rom. v. 12.¹² Rom. v. 18.

DISS. IV. leading object of the legislator and the magistrate is to prevent or punish this evil tendency ; of the poet and historian to describe it ; of the moralist to counteract it ; of the philosopher to explain it. And so difficult has the task of explanation proved, so perplexing to philosophy is the very early period at which the germs of corruption in the infant mind ripen to maturity—that heathen sages were driven to the supposition of pre-existence. They imagined that the soul had previously lived in a state of purity and perfection before its union with the present body ; and had fallen from that state in consequence of sin : and they were able, as they supposed, to account for the early progress of the child in vice, by reference to the vicious tendencies acquired and developed in a former life.

Proved from
the practical
concessions
of the Socinian him-
self.

Not only does the voice of mankind unite with the word of God in affirming the reality and the extent of human corruption ; but our Socinian himself, even our bold assertor of all-sufficient human virtue—whenever he is not engaged in actual argument, and is not disputing the necessity of an Advocate with the Father—is ready to make the same acknowledgment. In all his intercourse with society, he takes for granted that there is much depravity in the world ; that the world is full of envy, pride, injustice, falsehood, malignity, and uncharitableness. So far from thinking that the unfallen, the uncorrupt and guileless beings, (as in theory and in the ardour of debate he terms them,) by whom he is surrounded, are deserving of im-

plicit confidence ; he, in practice, evinces towards them no greater confidence than his orthodox opponent. As a householder, he secures with bars and bolts his person, his family, and his property from midnight violence and depredation. As a merchant or dealer, he secures his contracts with notes, bonds, and parchments ; and endeavours to preserve himself by these precautions from the attempts of fraud and dishonesty. As a citizen, he requires the government to provide for the safety of the public, against mutual assault and outrage, not only by legislative enactments and regulations of police ; but by the jail, the stocks, the scourge, the halter, and the scaffold. In reading works of general literature, which describe the human character, this maintainer of human innocence expects the strongest pictures to be drawn of depravity and wickedness : he requires the failings and imperfections, even of the purest and noblest among mankind, to be distinctly stated and drawn forth. He would even be offended at the attempt to describe a faultless being, and would indignantly affirm all such attempted descriptions to be unnatural, since no such being ever had existence upon the earth. Lastly, as a parent or guardian, he is prepared to counteract (by judicious warning, and perhaps corporeal chastisement,) the bad propensities in the heart of his young charge ; informing him that such discipline is wholesome and salutary, and forms a necessary remedy against his natural per-

DISS. IV.

DISS. IV. verseness and untractableness¹: and when the youth approached to manhood, he would endeavour to make him “know the world,” that is, to put him on his guard against the artifice, the cunning, the hypocrisy, the self-will and selfishness prevalent in society.

It appears then that the objector who denies the depravity of man, is systematically guided by the very doctrine which he rejects; and, indeed, never denies man to be depraved, except when he wishes to deny also, that man requires an Advocate with God².

Insuffici-
ency of re-
pentance.

Let us now examine the second and subsidiary assertion of the Socinian apologist, to disprove the necessity of a Mediator with God, namely—that repentance is all-sufficient, as an expiation for sin. We need scarcely observe on this point, that every text throughout the sacred volume, which, (either in the form of prophecy, of historic statement, or of exhortation,) refers to the sacrifice of Christ, implies the insufficiency of repentance without his expiatory mediation. Every text also, which affirms faith to be necessary for justification³, affirms repent-

¹ If any consideration in such cases would prevail to arrest the descent of the rod, it might be a suggestion from the young offender, of the *practical conformity* implied by his punishment, to the ninth article of religion.

² See South's Sermons, Dwight's Sermons, and Scott's Christian Life.

³ The reader who desires to see the whole subject of justification fully and distinctly explained, will find no better treatise for

ance without faith in Christ to be insufficient. DISS. IV.
 “Wounded for our transgressions, bruised for our iniquities, and with the chastisement of our peace upon him, Christ suffered, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God.” The Lamb of God “loved us, and washed us from our sins in his blood. Justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Ghost.” Our Saviour, in his preaching, unites, on all occasions, the two essentials for procuring pardon of sin: his exhortation is, not simply—“Repent ye,” but “repent ye and believe the Gospel¹.” The parting charge of St. Paul to the Ephesian elders summed up to them the whole course of his spiritual ministration in reminding them, that “both publicly, and from house to house, he had testified repentance towards God, and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ².” Every Christian reader will easily supply from memory quotations without number to the same effect.

Proved
from Scrip-
ture.

The notion, moreover, that repentance independent of a Mediator must be all-sufficient, is contradicted, not only by the word of Scripture, but by other arguments resulting from our use of reason and experience.

Proved
from reason
and expe-
rience.

this purpose, than the “Homily on Salvation,” referred to in our Eleventh Article of Religion.

¹ Mark i. 15.

² Acts xx. 21.

DISS. IV. By these universally-acknowledged guides, we are led to the conclusion, that apart from other considerations,—

1. Repentance *is not* regarded by our Divine Judge as a compensation for sin ;

2dly. That it *ought not* to be so regarded ; and

3dly. That it *has never been* so regarded by the great body of mankind ¹.

The sentiments of our Divine Judge may be collected from the course of nature. Under the ordinary administration of the Providential government on earth, repentance and amendment are not found, by any means, to place the violator of natural law in the same circumstances as if his sin had never been committed. Each offender undergoes a portion of suffering, from which no degree of sorrow or of remorse can, of itself, deliver him. The voluptuary, who by sensual indulgence has destroyed his health of body, is not, however earnest his repentance, restored to soundness of constitution. The detected peculator, however heartily he may repent an act of dishonesty, does not regain the happy privilege which he had forfeited of a character for integrity. The ruined spendthrift, however penitent for his prodigal career, does not reacquire the fortune which he has squandered. These bitter consequences, the penalties of sin in this life, are prolonged (as we daily see them) by the Divine

¹ See Butler's Analogy, *passim*. Also Magee on the Atonement.

Justice long after the sincere repentance which DISS. IV.
they have awakened. They establish, beyond contradiction, the general principle, that repentance is *not* regarded by our Almighty Judge—the God alike of nature and of grace—as compensating for previous delinquency.

Again: that repentance, exclusive of mediation, *ought not* to be regarded as compensating for sin—is a dictate of our moral sense as clear and certain, as the fact is certain, from experience and observation, that God does not so regard it. The law of God requires, at all times, the utmost exercise of every faculty, physical, intellectual, and moral, in his service. To his justice we are responsible for the complete performance of this duty. When in any instance we fall short of that complete obedience, no future effort can supply our deficiency. No resources are at our own disposal, from which we might repay the debt incurred; or compensate by the labours of to-day for the defalcations of any former period.

A further reply to the Socinian objector is, that his doctrine of all-sufficient repentance has never been entertained by mankind, and is contradicted by the universal practice of all nations, (from the beginning of history,) in their religious rites and ceremonies. The religion of every people throughout the earth has more or less been *expiatory*: in other words, sacrifices of some kind or other have been offered for the purpose of supplying the deficiencies of repentance, and of securing, if possible,

DISS. IV. the forgiveness of the Deity—from a humiliating and fearful conviction, that mere amendment would be of no avail. That this was the design of sacrifice has never been denied. The victim, in all cases, was intended to be an offering for sin ; and the more costly the more effectual ; so that when inferior sacrifices were thought inadequate, human victims were substituted. It is to this deep and overpowering sense of unexpiated guilt that the prophet alludes when he ascribes this question to the conscience-stricken penitent : “ Wherewith shall I come before the Lord, and bow myself before the high God ? Shall I come before him with burnt offerings, with calves of a year old ? Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil ? Shall I give my first-born for my transgressions ; the fruit of my body for the sin of the soul ¹ ? ”

The same sentiment pervades every other ordinance of heathen worship. By various forms of deprecation ; by costly incense ; by long and dangerous pilgrimages ; by daily and even hourly ablutions ; by penances and self-inflicted tortures, too horrible to be contemplated—all nations, (even such as have agreed in nothing else,) have united to declare their consciousness of a universal necessity for some further recommendation to the Divine Being than the personal repentance of his worshipper.

¹ Micah vi. 6, 7.

These various proofs from the course of nature, DISS. IV.
 from our sense of Divine justice, from the concurring sentiments of the great body of mankind, and above all, from the declarations of Scripture, establish the necessity of a Mediator. We indispensably need an advocate. Our best performances in the sight of an all perfect Being, of "purer eyes than to behold iniquity¹," will not bear inspection for a moment. We are totally unworthy to hold any direct communication with that supreme Lawgiver whose authority we have defied. Through our extreme degeneracy we have rendered ourselves entirely unfit for any near approach to the Supreme Majesty in the heavens. Under these circumstances we can conceive no method by which our *pardon* could be so effectually reconciled with *God's holiness*, as by the appointment of a Mediator. This method, accordingly, has been adopted. It has succeeded. In the scheme of Christian redemption, "peace on earth and good will to man," according to the angelic announcement, have been made compatible with "Glory to God in the highest²:" "mercy and truth," to use the language of the Psalmist, "have met together: righteousness and peace have kissed each other³." God may, without danger of self-abasement, bend from his everlasting throne freely to converse with man; and man, though meriting eternal condemnation,

¹ Hab. i. 13.² Luke ii. 14.³ Psalm lxxxv. 10.

DISS. IV. may, without distrust or terror, draw near as freely to God.

Fitness of
the Media-
tor chosen.

The chief point thus demonstrated, and a necessity for the mediatorial office satisfactorily proved, there remains only a question as to the *fitness* of the intercessor chosen. Our Socinian opponents may, on various grounds, attempt to invalidate his competency ; even after owning the appointment of some advocate with the Father to be indispensable. They may dispute perhaps the right of the Father to choose for them an advocate without consulting them in the selection. They may remark that when, in affairs of this world, an umpire between two parties at variance is chosen, the choice to be binding requires mutual consent ; and they carry with them, indistinctly, the same notion into spiritual concerns.

1. Because
appointed
by proper
authority.

It must, no doubt, be admitted, that where two contending parties are *equal*, each of them has a right to be consulted in the nomination of a mediator between them ; and neither of them is under any obligation to accept a choice made exclusively by the other. But in cases where one party is greatly *superior* to the other, or holds over the other the right of entire sovereignty, it is sufficient that the mediator be appointed by the sovereign. The subject is bound by the sovereign's determination. For he who mediates between a sovereign and his subjects, acts for him as *vicegerent*, and for them as *advocate*. As the sovereign therefore has

a right to the obedience of his subjects, whether they consent or not, and may at pleasure grant or withhold his favours ; so likewise he may, whether they consent or not, demand their obedience by what vicegerent he thinks fit, and bestow his favours by what advocate he may choose to appoint.

DISS. IV.

The application of this statement to our condition with respect to God is easily made. Almighty God is the Sovereign Lord, and absolute Master of us all. The right therefore of appointing a Mediator between him and us belongs to him alone. That right he has accordingly exercised. He has chosen the blessed Jesus for the mediatorial office, to exercise authority over man on the part of God, and to procure mercy from God on the part of man. Jesus is for this reason called the Christ, or anointed of God, in allusion to the ancient solemnity of anointing with oil, the sign or token by which kings and priests were consecrated to their respective dignities. This title, therefore, of the Lord's anointed, being applied to Jesus, denotes his appointment by Almighty God to this eminent dignity of Mediator, in which the two offices of King and Priest just mentioned are included. Thus we are told : " Him hath God exalted with his own right hand to be a prince and a Saviour, to give repentance unto Israel and forgiveness of sins¹ ;" that is, to insist, as mediating for God, on *repentance in Israel*—and to procure, as mediating for man, *forgiveness of*

¹ Acts v. 31.

DISS. IV. *sins* from God. And again it is written : “ Let all the house of Israel know of a surety that God hath made that same Jesus whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ¹ ;” that is, not an agent for one party only, but both God’s vicegerent upon earth, and our advocate in heaven.

It follows, therefore, that the want of our consent in the choice of Christ for our advocate, is a vain and a presumptuous objection. It follows that our refusal of an advocate chosen by the Father, (and by him formally designated to the office,) would be an act of disobedience to our Almighty Sovereign, equally subversive of his authority, and equally deserving of punishment, with direct and avowed rebellion.

But although the persons whose misconceptions we are endeavouring to remove should thus far agree with us, and should acknowledge both the necessity of an advocate, and God’s exclusive right to appoint him ; they call perhaps in question on another ground the fitness of the advocate appointed. They doubt his influence in the court of heaven. They consider him as a mere creature of God’s power ; nay, as a mere human being. They regard the distance between him and the Creator as immeasurable. They suppose that such an advocate, so far from being able to assist us in our access to the Father, requires himself the intervention of an advocate between him and God.

¹ Acts. ii. 36.

They conceive, in short, his advocacy to have almost as little chance of being effectual as their own. DISS. IV.

Here we may address such persons as our Saviour addressed the Jews: "Ye do greatly err, not knowing the Scriptures¹." Christ, in the Scriptures, is every where denied to be a mere human creature. He is declared to be "the only begotten Son of God²." His acceptance of the mediatorial character, is represented as a most surprising and unexampled act of condescending mercy. "In the form of God, and equal with God," he is described as deigning by an exercise of grace unspeakable and unbounded to "take upon him" for our sakes, "the form of a servant³." The titles by which he is made known to us, express majesty inconceivable. He is called "The Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, the first and the last⁴;" "the Wisdom set up from the beginning, or ever the earth was⁵:" "The Creator who hath laid the foundations of the earth⁶," "and without whom was not any thing made that was made⁷;" "the mighty God⁸:" "The Lord of Glory⁹:" The Jehovah who hath "life in himself, and quickeneth whom he will¹⁰." He is said to be "over all things: God blessed for ever¹¹." He is called "one with the Father¹²:" the eternal Word, who was "in

2. Because possessing sufficient influence with God.

¹ Matt. ii. 29.

² 1 John iv. 9.

³ Philip. ii. 7.

⁴ Rev. i. 11.

⁵ Prov. viii. 23.

⁶ Heb. i. 10.

⁷ John i. 3.

⁸ Isaiah ix. 6.

⁹ 1 Cor. ii. 8.

¹⁰ John v. 26.

¹¹ Rom. ix. 5.

¹² John x. 30.

DISS. IV. the beginning with God¹,” and who “is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever².” He is styled “Emmanuel, or God with us³ ;” “the Prince of Peace⁴ ;” the “great God our Saviour⁵ ;” “through whom we have access by our Spirit unto the Father⁶.” What believer in the Scripture can doubt the influence of such an advocate? Well might the Psalmist affirm, that God hath “laid help upon one that is mighty⁷.”

But the persons with whom we are contending, in reference to the fitness of our advocate, may now, as a last resource, affirm, that in proving Christ a Divine person, we prove too much. We make him as inaccessible as the Father. They no longer think a Mediator expedient between Christ and God ; but they now see plainly a necessity for a Mediator between him and us. We need, say they, an advocate to plead for us with the very Advocate appointed to conduct our cause.

3. From his sympathy with man.

Here again, from ignorance of the Scriptures, our opponents “do greatly err.” “The Word was made flesh⁸.” the Lord of glory assumed the form of a servant ; “the Son of God was made in the likeness of men⁹ ;” conceived of the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, he suffered for our redemption, was crucified, dead and buried. Raised from the dead, he is now seated at the

¹ John i. 2.

² Heb. xiii. 8.

³ Is. vii. 14. Matt. i. 23.

⁴ Is. ix. 6.

⁵ Titus ii. 13.

⁶ Eph. ii. 18.

⁷ Ps. lxxxix. 19.

⁸ John i. 14.

⁹ Phil. ii. 7.

right hand of the Father; there, as an authorized and all prevailing advocate, to plead in our behalf¹. DISS. IV.

What then can our adversaries reasonably urge against this Advocate? Admitting an advocate to be necessary, acknowledging God's exclusive right to appoint him, and confessing the Divine and human natures to be united in his person, we have every motive imaginable joyfully and thankfully to avail ourselves of his gracious intervention. As "the Son of God," the "well beloved of the Father," he has interest unlimited at the court of heaven. As the "Son of man," the friend and Saviour of sinners, who was "on all points tempted like as we are"², he is 'touched' in the highest possible degree with the feeling of our infirmities³. Nay more, by condescendingly undertaking, (to our unspeakable admiration and everlasting comfort,) the office of our advocate, he stands engaged to interest himself as warmly in our concerns as if they were his own. He stands identified with us. He stands pledged to act as much for our advantage, as we ourselves would act, if we, possessing

¹ The force of this last mentioned Socinian objection, appears to be admitted by the Romanists, who, not considering with due attention the doctrine of the incarnation, practise the invocation of the Blessed Virgin, of saints and of angels, as mediators with Christ. With respect to angels, it is curious to remark, that we possess more of a kindred nature to Christ than to them. *He can be "touched with a feeling of our infirmities;" they cannot.*

² Heb. iv. 15.

³ Ibid.

DISS. IV. his influence, were seated in his place, “at the right hand of the Majesty on high ¹.”

We now dismiss Socinianism, and proceed, under the second division of our subject, to examine the opposite principles with which we have contrasted it. This other erroneous extreme, that of the Antinomians, is as frequent and dangerous as that which we have been discussing. It is the error of those who also misapplying, (though in an opposite manner,) the doctrine of mediation, and making Christ an agent for one party only, restrict him to the office of pleading our cause with God. They are willing to own him for man’s mediator with God; but are unwilling to receive him for God’s mediator with man. They accept him as an advocate: they refuse him as a king. They acknowledge him as a priest, to expiate their sins: they discard him as a lawgiver and a prophet, to establish and explain to them the rules of their duty.

Antinomi-
anism of
Carpocra-
tes.

It was remarked of Antinomianism that it is not only very ancient², but admits of very numerous varieties and degrees. Out of these we shall select only the more prominent and dangerous. Respecting Carpocrates, to whom allusion was made in the short history at the commencement of this Essay, no formal refutation can be required. Our only

¹ Heb. i. 3.

² The epistle of St. James is understood to have been written against this heresy, which had arisen from misconstructions of St. Paul’s strong language respecting Justification by Faith. Carpocrates, therefore, in the second century, only carried to greater length a system which had previously existed.

difficulty would be to discover, in the constitution of the human mind, what principle could have given birth to such a monstrous system of moral deformity. It seems unaccountable that any teacher of religion should have been tolerated for a moment in any age or country, who should affirm that, in order to attain salvation, there was "an absolute necessity for committing all sorts of crimes, and for filling up the measure of iniquity." Could he possibly imagine that, in order to appreciate the Christian sacrifice, it was necessary to have been guilty of notorious wickedness? Did he conceive that persons whose moral conduct has been, comparatively and in general, correct, are in danger of depending upon their own good works, to the entire or even partial exclusion of their Redeemer's merits? while persons on the other hand who had committed gross and scandalous enormities, would alone be deeply and penitentially impressed with a conviction of their unworthiness, and that without a Saviour they were undone for ever? If this was the origin of the Carpocratian system, its founder does not seem to have considered that the proper and most effectual method of inculcating religious humility is not to depress but to elevate the scale of moral duty; not to encourage the commission of great crimes, but to attach importance to the smallest deviation from Christian propriety; and that the best proof of a wholesome state of conscience is not its being only sensible of deep wounds, but its having a quick and delicate perception of the

DISS. IV. slightest incisions or punctures. In what degree there may be Christians in modern times, who have studied in the school of Carpocrates, and have unadvisedly expressed themselves in conformity with his extraordinary system we are not concerned to determine.

Antinomi-
anism pro-
perly so
called.

We now come to the main position of Antinomianism properly so called. The Antinomians of this country have chiefly striven to maintain, that believers, having already obeyed the Divine law in the person of Christ, cannot be expected to obey it in their own persons. A law, they allege, needs only *one obedience*, *i. e.* either an obedience in our own person or by substitute : whereas the reception of Christ as a King implies two obediences to the same law. Having, say they, the perfect righteousness of Christ imputed to us, we cannot, with any prospect of advantage, superadd an imperfect righteousness of our own ¹.

¹ A learned Dissenter, Mr. Joseph Boyse, of Dublin, observes, "To our shame be it spoken, some writers that disclaim the name of Antinomians, have yet ventured such absurd assertions as these:—That pardon is rather the condition of faith, and much more, having a causal influence thereto, than faith and repentance are of pardon : that as to the elect, there was never any guilt upon them in the judgment of God : that justification is before effectual vocation : that the doctrine of justification *before faith* is not an error, but a great and glorious truth : that justification, in regard to application, must be before believing : a believer is to work *from* life, and not *for* life : that the gospel is not the rule of judgment, but the law only : we, through Christ's righteousness, have a right to glory by Adam's covenant. It were easy to mul-

This plausible system is overthrown at once by attending distinctly to the true nature of mediation. DISS. IV.

A mediator or arbiter is not concerned for one side only. God, on the one hand, has entrusted to Christ the interests of his government; as we, on the other hand, have the privilege of committing to Christ the interest of our souls. Christ, as Mediator, has most solemnly undertaken to maintain his Father's authority as well as to secure our salvation. He will not act as the representative or advocate of man, unless he is received also as the representative or vicegerent of God. He will not impute to us his righteousness, unless we endeavour faithfully after personal sanctification. Faith has been well defined, (and in this definition Antinomians themselves must unite with us): "*The reception of Christ as he is offered to us in the Gospel.*" But he is not offered only as an advocate, he is also offered as a king. The two offices of advocate and king belong inseparably to his mediatorial dignity. Answered.

In reference to Antinomian principles it seems important to observe, with what happy foresight St. Paul anticipates and provides against the tendency of our fallen nature to systems favouring

tiply expressions of the same vile sound, even used by such as would take it ill to be called Antinomians."—See Boyse's Works, vol. i. folio, p. 451, published in London A.D. 1728, with a recommendatory preface, by Calamy, Evans, Newman, &c. Other passages from Crisp, and various writers of the Antinomian school, will be found in the same volume.

DISS. IV. licentiousness. This great preacher of free grace repeatedly supposes immoral inferences to be drawn from his doctrine, and uniformly repels them with indignation and abhorrence. Having stated, for example, in his Epistle to the Romans, how much the grace of God is manifested through the sinfulness of man, he imagines that a claim to immunity in sin might be grounded on this statement. "If our unrighteousness," says he, "commend" (confirm or illustrate) "the righteousness of God; what shall we say? Is" (not) "God unrighteous who taketh vengeance?" In other words, is not God unjust to punish us for our unrighteousness, which has been the means of magnifying his own character? To this impious question the Apostle answers, "God forbid! for then how shall God judge the world¹?" Again, in the same Epistle, the objection is a second time supposed; "Do we make void the law through faith?" or do we by asserting our justification through belief in Christ, thereby invalidate the claims of God's law to our obedience? And the answer is again returned; "God forbid! Yea, we establish the law²." And a third time, "What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid! How shall we that are dead to sin, live any longer therein³?" In the same Epistle there is one further passage to the same effect; "Shall we sin," the Apostle asks, "because we are not

¹ Rom. iii. 5.² Ibid. iii. 31.³ Ibid. vi. 12.

under the law, but under grace? God forbid! DISS. IV.
 Know ye not that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom you obey, whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness¹?" In his Epistle to the Galatians, he once more supposes similar conclusions to be drawn from his doctrine, and once more denounces them in the same emphatic terms. "Is Christ," he asks "the minister of sin?" And he answers with horror; "God forbid!"

We may add, that besides repeatedly condemning Antinomian heresies in the strong terms here quoted, the Apostle mentions them continually under the name of *deceptions*, and warns his readers not to be deceived. "Know ye not," he writes in his Epistle to the Corinthians, "know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? *Be not deceived*; neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God²." Writing to the Galatians he repeats the warning; "*Be not deceived*, for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap³." Again, in his Epistle to the Ephesians, after reckoning up a long catalogue of sins, he adds, "Let no man *deceive* you with vain words; for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience⁴." Passages of similar

¹ Rom. vi. 15, 16.

² 1 Cor. vi. 9, 10.

³ Gal. vi. 7.

⁴ Ephes. v. 6.

DISS. IV. import are to be found in the other Apostolic writings. "Be ye doers of the word," says St. James, "and not hearers only, *deceiving* your own selves¹." So likewise St. John; "Let no man *deceive* you; he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as he" (Christ) "is righteous²."

The Holy Scripture, therefore, every where disclaims in the strongest and most pointed manner the Antinomian heresy. Unless we resolve upon becoming dutiful subjects of the Almighty Sovereign for whom Christ is arbiter, Christ will not plead our cause. Is it not the duty of an arbiter or mediator to act impartially for *both* the parties whom he represents? And is not Christ, for that reason, as fully bound to reduce us under obedience, or to punish us for impenitence, as to procure for us restoration to favour? Undoubtedly he is so bound; and undoubtedly he will discharge the obligation. He will be no less a faithful viceroy, than a faithful advocate. He will be not less careful to see God obeyed or avenged, than to see us pardoned and rewarded. He so entirely loved us as to "lay down his life" for our salvation: but he will not, for our sakes, betray his Father's trust. He will not sacrifice his Father's authority to our safety. He will not plead for our pardon while we persist in our rebellion. On the contrary, when, (at his second coming,) he shall reappear as the representative of God, this just and

¹ James i. 22.

² John iii. 7.

impartial Mediator, will render to "every man DISS. IV. according to his deeds : to them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory, and honour, and immortality, eternal life : but unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish upon every soul of man that doeth evil¹".

We have now remarked upon two forms of Antinomian heresy, sufficiently distinguished from each other : namely, the doctrine of Carpocrates, who thought it necessary to do evil ; and that of the Antinomian, in the stricter sense of the term, who consider good and evil in morals as matters of indifference. We come, lastly, to a very large, very influential, and much more important class, that of the moderate Antinomians ; who have, from various preventive circumstances, been deterred from making any great proficiency in the Carpocratian theology. All persons comprehended under this latter denomination, agree to consider some parts only of the moral law as obligatory, while they reckon other parts indifferent or unessential. They disagree, however, as might be expected, in reference to the particular portions of Scriptural morality to be retained or disregarded. Some few among the most remarkable of these defective moralists may require attention.

Moderate
Antinomi-
ans.

But before proceeding to them, it is necessary to

¹ Rom. ii. 6—10.

DISS. IV. premise that (in the observations which follow,) we make no allusion to any Christian who is really desirous of keeping the whole law of God—but who, through the unavoidable infirmities of human nature, finds himself unable, notwithstanding all his exertions and all his prayers to accomplish this great object of his spiritual ambition—no allusion to any Christian, who is sorrowfully alive to a sense of his manifold deficiencies, confessing and lamenting those aberrations from moral rectitude which he labours earnestly to avoid : we desire to confine our view to that number, (nominally Christian, and professing to expect salvation through Christ,) who rest contented with mere partial obedience ; who make no consistent efforts for their own spiritual improvement ; and who, so far from studying to keep the whole law, scruple not to offend in one point, or rather to offend in many points, wilfully, proudly, perseveringly. Such persons, in the eye of the Church, are greater heretics, than many who more frequently receive the name.

The Formalist.

We may begin, then, with some remarks upon a numerous and outwardly respectable body, the *formalists*, or formal Christians, who restrict the obligations of Divine law to the observance of religious rites and ceremonies. This kind of partial Antinomianism is older than Christianity itself. Our Lord reproves it sharply in the instance of the Scribes and Pharisees who made long prayers, and practised frequent fastings ; who performed continual ablutions ; made broad their phylac-

aries ; observed carefully the Mosaic festivals ; DISS. IV.
never omitted an appointed sacrifice ; and who
scrupulously paid to the Levites their stipulated
dues, (even upon certain articles, as mint, anise,
and cummin, liable to be disputed :) but who
omitted at the same time the weightier matters of
the law, “justice, mercy, and faith¹.” The Chris-
tian Church has, unhappily, been seldom free from
examples of like formalism. Among our supersti-
tious brethren of the Romish Church the same phari-
saical reliance is placed on similar devices of monas-
tic rigour, none of which are connected with real
virtue, but any or all of which are compatible with
the foulest profligacy. In our own Church, and in
other protestant communions where such practices
are discouraged, the same antinomian desire of
placing all religion in religious forms to the exclu-
sion of morality, is also fatally, though less excu-
sably indulged. For our rites and ceremonies are
few and simple ; and our performance of them, re-
quiring but little time or effort, is no extraordi-
nary evidence of devotedness to God : though the
neglect of them would, for the same reason, imply
the utmost possible indifference about pleasing
him. A Romanist, in the daily practice of severe
penances and mortifications, has some excuse for
valuing himself on these his painful, frequent, and
laborious exercises ; and may well look down, with
some contempt or pity, upon the puny efforts of

¹ Matt. xxiii. 23.

DISS. IV. his Christian brethren, who, members of other Churches, disregard, equally with himself, the obligations of vital holiness; yet can only offer in its stead those comparatively light and easy tributes of ceremony, which alone the most rigid formalist among Protestants feels called upon to pay.

The Enthusiast.

Next to the formalist or superstitious Antinomian we may place the votaries of enthusiasm. They confine the law of Christ to inward feeling, without regard to outward conduct; to the fervours of a lively but fluctuating piety seated in the imagination rather than in the heart¹. A Christian of this imaginative character holds himself in high esteem for the extraordinary love which he thinks he bears towards God and towards his Saviour. He can describe in lofty and appropriate language the mysterious grandeur of the Divine character, the unspeakable mercies of redemption, and the transcendent glories of the heavenly state. He can lengthen out his prayers with great apparent earnestness, with commendable aptitude to his circumstances, and frequently without previous meditation. He can enlarge with considerable copiousness on any passage chosen for exposition from the sacred volume; and can express his indignation at the coldness, real or suspected, of those humbler individuals among his Christian brethren, whose piety,

¹ See a recent work, entitled "The Natural History of Enthusiasm," where some valuable observations are made by an anonymous author, on this very frequent and very dangerous species of error.

(however sound, however scriptural, however spiritually and deeply rooted,) is less rapturous and voluble than his own. But in the midst of all this apparent fervour, the enthusiastic Antinomians seldom cares to inquire what practical effects should follow from his religious visions of extacy : his animation is merely transient, vapoury, and occasional. It produces no results of actual virtue, no efforts of consistent holiness in his life and conversation. Descanting with eloquence on the love of his Creator, he can leave the wants of his fellow-creatures unsupplied. Discoursing with animation upon the life and precepts and example of his Redeemer, he can forget the use and application to himself of that life, and of those precepts, and of that example. Enlarging with commendable fluency on the influences of the Holy Spirit, and soliciting with apparent zeal this inestimable gift, he can omit all serious inquiry how far he has been led and influenced by the guidance which he prays for. In his exercises of self-examination it is not his *conduct* which he scrutinizes, but his *feelings* ; not what he *does*, but what he *fancies* ; not whether he becomes from day to day, (through the operation of religious principle,) a better subject of Almighty God, a better man, a better Christian, a better member of society—more pure, more temperate, more peaceful, more upright, and disinterested, more amiable, gentle, and beneficent ;—but whether his imagination continues in an equal degree excited, his com-

DISS. IV. mand of scriptural expression undiminished, and his sentimental fervour in devotion unabated.

The Sect-
ary.

But among the numerous descriptions of partial Antinomianism, there is none more pernicious in society than that variety which we shall next consider, namely, that of the factious professors of religion. Persons of this character confine all religious duty to uncompromising zeal for the interests of their own particular sect or party. Devotion to this one object includes, as they practically expound it, the whole law of God. Towards numbers of the same body, who entertain the same opinion as themselves, they are kind and forgiving, and beneficent. They promote at any cost, with disinterested generosity, the objects of their own particular communion. They would deem it scandalous and unpardonable to scruple any sacrifice of their time, their money, their strength, their abilities on this altar of their bigoted idolatry. On the other hand, towards any fellow-Christian who has the misfortune, or perhaps the wisdom, to differ from them, they are far from exercising with equal readiness the laws of Christian charity. They detract from his best qualities. They make but small allowance for his infirmities. They look with quiet consciences on their neglect of his distresses: and if political be added to religious controversy, they are restrained perhaps, from visiting him occasionally with inquisitorial rigours, not so much from want of inclination as from want of

power. We might be apt to wonder how any Christian, professing obedience to the Divine law, could bring himself to entertain such partial and erroneous views of moral duty. But it is a lamentable characteristic of the factious religionist, that he ascribes to the Divinity a participation of his own narrow-minded partialities and antipathies. He presumes Almighty God to entertain the same sectarian prejudices as himself, and to regard with such complacency the aspirations of party zeal, as to overlook in the zealot a general neglect of moral obligations.

To these illustrations of partial Antinomianism, many others might be added. For in fact, every individual whose religious principles are such, that he can pretend to justify himself in the perpetration of any favourite sin, or the omission of any unwelcome duty, is included in our catalogue of partial Antinomians. We might, therefore, go on to instance many who profess religion to the exclusion of morality; and many more who profess morality to the subversion of religion. We might enumerate the multitudes who select some one commandment to which they unscrupulously refuse obedience, on the plea that they observe others for breaking which they have no temptation. We might with still better reason bring forward the case of those misguided persons, who seem to have made a determination never actually to perform the will of God; but to be heartily sorry at the hour of dissolution, for having left it unperformed. We

DISS. IV.

Numerous
other varie-
ties.

DISS. IV. might advert lastly, to the case of persons who are satisfied, in general, with moderate attainments in religion; and who disregard the injunctions with which the pages of the Gospel abound, to advance in holiness; to “grow in grace¹”; to “go on unto perfection²”; to “press towards the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus³.”

Concluding
exhortation.

To all these various adherents of Antinomian heresy, we would once for all, and finally recommend a frequent and solemn meditation upon the character and office of their Divine Saviour, as Mediator between God and man. Let them call up to view the stupendous trust with which he is invested—no less a trust than the vindication of God’s eternal Justice, and the restoration of the Divine authority over the hearts and wills of mankind. Let them reckon up the powers he has received, and the means he has exerted for accomplishing this great object of his mediatorial mission. Did a Mediator descend for man’s redemption, to purchase with his blood an undefiled church, a church which should be pronounced a temple of the Holy Ghost—and shall Christians be satisfied with degrees of moral virtue which heathenism would be ashamed of? Was the Son of God a sufferer on the cross—only that the formalist might be satisfied with an unsubstantial, shadowy, and inoperative religion, practising mechanically the means of grace, but careless to secure the ends?

¹ 2 Pet. iii. 8.

² Heb. vi. 1.

³ Philip. iii. 14.

Did the Redeemer of the world lay down his life—only to receive from the rapturous visionary a return of empty, heartless, unproductive professions? Has the Prince of Peace shed the influences of his spirit, and revealed a law of mercy, and charity, and good will to men—only that the votary of faction might spread discord, and malice, and envy, and uncharitableness? Or, lastly, can such a Mediator have been appointed, or can he have undertaken, “armed with all power both in earth and heaven¹,” to restore the Divine authority among our fallen and rebellious race—only that we might content ourselves with moderate attainments, and make no effectual efforts for “perfecting holiness in the fear of God²?”

¹ Matt. xxviii. 18,

² 2 Cor. vii. 1.

NOTES.

NOTE (A.)

ATTEMPTS have been made to show that the ancient Monks of North Britain, called "the Culdees," whose chief settlement was at Iona, among the Western Isles, were an exception to the rule in the text. But after the complete refutation in the very able and learned inquiry upon this subject, prefixed by Dr. Russell to his new edition of Keith's catalogue of Scottish Bishops, that notion will not probably again be urged.

Episcopal succession among the Waldenses and Albigenses, is fully proved by Dr. Allix, in his elaborate and valuable work, entitled "Some Remarks upon the Ecclesiastical History of the Ancient Churches of Piedmont," printed in 1690. In his preface he declares his design of proving with respect to both these Churches, (viz. the Waldenses and Albigenses,) that, in claiming to have derived their original from the Apostles, they advanced nothing which was not exactly conformable to the history of the ages past, from the time of the Apostles to the thirteenth century. "This" he adds, "I shall endeavour by making out the succession of these Churches, as well with respect to their doctrine and worship, as with respect to their ministry." Accordingly, this author in his twenty-fourth chapter, page 239, argues and establishes this point at considerable length, and shows that not only in Piedmont itself, but also in different parts of Europe where Waldensian principles were diffused, the jurisdiction of Bishops was upheld. In the course of his argument, he remarks "if we cast our eyes upon the colonies they" (the Waldenses) "have sent to several places, we shall find the same discipline in

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tended not to any such authority¹. For when in the prosecuting his office of an Evangelist, (whose duty it was to convert unbelievers,) he had converted a great many at Samaria, and baptized them, he pretended not to confirm them, by the laying on of hands, or to settle any Church offices amongst them, but gave notice of what he had done to the Apostles, and they sent two of their own order for this purpose. Wherefore, though it should be admitted that Timothy and Titus were both Evangelists, which yet cannot be proved, this alone, if they were not Bishops also, as the Evangelists commonly were, could give them no authority to ordain Presbyters, or govern particular churches, as the one did Ephesus, and the other Crete. But they (as the late Right Reverend² Bishop of Worcester very well remarks) “who go about to unbishop Timothy, and Titus, may as well unscripture the Epistles that were written to them, and make them only some occasional writings, as they make Timothy and Titus to have been some particular and occasional officers. But the Christian Church preserving these Epistles as of constant and perpetual use, did thereby suppose the same kind of office to continue, for the sake whereof these excellent Epistles were written, and we have no greater assurance that these Epistles were written by St. Paul, than we have that there were Bishops to succeed the Apostles in the care and government of Churches.”—See Brett on Church Government, p. 63.

NOTE (E.)

St. James, the brother of our Lord, is called an Apostle, and yet he was not in the number of the twelve, but he was Bishop of Jerusalem. First: That St. James was called “an Apostle,” appears by the testimony of St. Paul: “But other Apostles saw I none, save James, the Lord’s brother³.” Secondly: That he was none of the twelve appears also, because among the twelve Apostles there were but two Jameses; the son of Alphaeus, and James, the son of Zebedee, the brother of John. But neither of these was the James, whom St. Paul calls “the Lord’s brother.”

¹ Acts viii. 5. &c. ² Dut. and Rights of Parish Clergy, p. 11. ³ Gal. i. 19.

And this St. Paul intimates, in making a distinct enumeration of all the appearances which Christ made after the resurrection¹: "First to Cephas, then to the twelve, then to the five hundred brethren, then to James, then to all the Apostles." So that here St. James is reckoned distinctly from the twelve, and they from the whole college of the Apostles; for there were, it seems, more of that dignity than the twelve. But this will also safely rely upon the concurrent testimony of Hegesippus, Clement, Eusebius, Epiphanius, St. Ambrose, and St. Jerome².—Bishop Taylor on Episcopacy, section iv.

NOTE (F.)

And it will be a further confirmation of the Episcopal authority of the *seven Angels* in their several Churches, if it be shown from the most early accounts of the Primitive Church, that Bishops were settled in all the seven Churches, at or near the time when this Epistle was sent to them. Now this Epistle, with the rest of the Revelation, if we may believe³ Irenæus and⁴ Eusebius, was written towards the time of Domitian's death, when St. John lived in exile in Patmos; and we are told that in a very short time after Domitian's death, being recalled from banishment by Nerva, he went to Ephesus, and took upon him the care of the Church of that city in the presence of seven Bishops⁵. I will not affirm, that these seven Bishops presided in the seven Churches we are speaking of; though some think they did, both because the numbers agree, and all these seven Churches lay within the Proconsular Asia, whereof Ephesus was the Metropolis. But thus much we may safely pronounce, that if Bishops were settled at that time in other cities thereabouts, there is no reason to think these seven Churches, every one of which was in a city of note, were without Bishops. And to descend to particulars, it can scarce be doubted, but there was a Bishop in Ephesus when the Revelation was

¹ 1 Cor. xv.

² Vide Carol. Bovium in Constit. Apost. Schol. Hieron. de Script. Eccl. in Jacob. et in Galat. 1.—Epiphani. Hæres. 78, 79. Tract. 124 in Johan.

³ Advers. Hæres. lib. v. cap. xxx.

⁴ Eccles. Hist. lib. iii. cap. xviii.

⁵ Martyrium S. Timothei apud Photium Bibliothec. cod. 254.

written. For in the next age after this, Polycrates, who was born within a short time after St. John's death, is well known to have been Bishop of Ephesus. And to come nearer to the time we are speaking of, Ignatius, who suffered martyrdom about the tenth year of Trajan, (which at the most was not above twelve years after St. John returned from Patmos,) in his epistle to the Ephesians, speaks of Onesimus, their Bishop, whom he exhorts all of them, Presbyters and Deacons, as well as private Christians to obey. And to carry this account yet a little higher, Timothy was made Bishop of Ephesus by St. Paul: and there was an uninterrupted succession of twenty-seven Bishops from him to the time of the great Council of Chalcedon, as was before shown from the public acts of that Council. So that here was a Bishop mentioned a little before the Revelation was written, and again not long after, besides a constant succession of many Bishops from the foundation of this Church for several ages after. Then if we proceed to the rest of the seven Churches, not long after St. John's time, Sagaris was Bishop of Laodicea. He is spoken of by the forementioned Polycrates in his Epistle to Victor¹, as one who suffered martyrdom in the past times; that is, when Servilius Paulus was Proconsul of Asia, as we learn from Melito's Tract about Easter, who was himself Bishop of Sardis, in the reign of Marcus Aurelius². And if the Roman Martyrology may be credited, Sagaris was one of St. Paul's disciples: so that very near the time we are speaking of, we find a Bishop in Laodicea; and not long after this, another in Sardis. When Ignatius wrote his epistle to the Philadelphians, they had a Bishop, whose gravity, modesty, and other virtues Ignatius commends, and exhorts the Philadelphians to be dutiful to him. The old Roman Martyrology speaks of Carpus, Bishop of Thyatira, who suffered martyrdom under Antoninus, who was Emperor in the next age after the Revelation was written. If the commentary of Arethas on the Revelation, compiled out of the ancient Fathers, may be credited, Antipas, whom our Lord calls his *faithful martyr*³, was

¹ Euseb. Eccles. Hist. lib. v. cap. xxiv.

² Euseb. Eccles. Hist. lib. iv. cap. xxvi.

³ Rev. ii. 23.

Bishop of Pergamus. And if we may judge of the rest by the Church of Smyrna, (and there is no reason why we should not, since the Angel of this city is not described as different from the rest,) we shall no longer doubt, whether they were governed by Bishops in this first age of Christianity; it being certain, that Polycarp, who is allowed by all to have conversed with the Apostles, was Bishop of Smyrna. He is so called by Polycrates in his forementioned epistle to Victor, who was thirty-eight years old, when Polycarp suffered martyrdom, and therefore is a witness without exception. And the same title is given him by the Church of Smyrna, in their Epistle concerning his martyrdom, which is still extant in Eusebius¹. Ignatius his contemporary, who wrote an Epistle to Polycarp, and another to the Church of Smyrna, not only calls him Bishop of Smyrna, but exhorts all the Church of Smyrna, Presbyters and Deacons, as well as Laymen, to be obedient to him. Lastly, we are assured by Irenæus, who was Polycarp's disciple, that he was ordained Bishop of Smyrna by the Apostles². So that here is sufficient evidence for the presiding of Bishops in the seven forementioned Churches in or soon after the time in which the Revelation was written; and indeed more than could well have been expected from the short and imperfect accounts which are left us of the Church in that age.—Potter on Church Government, chap. iv. p. 151.

NOTE (G.)

Hæc sunt ab Eusebio adeo diligenter luculentèque exposita, ut Dallæus ipse dixerit, Fatemur Eusebium illas Epistolas agnoscere, et pro verè Ignatianis habere: neque dissimulamus eas de quibus ille verba facit has ipsas fuisse videri, quæ his hodie nominibus circumferuntur! quales eas Reverendissimus Usserius Latinè, eruditissimus Vossius Gracè, ex libris ille Anglicanis, hic Medicæis ediderunt.—Pearson. Vind. Ignat. cap. ii. p. 8.

Cum tot omnium sæculorum testimonia adduxerimus, nihil

¹ Eccles. Hist. lib. iv. cap. xii.

² Irenæus, lib. iii. cap. iii. Eusebius Eccles. Hist. lib. iii. cap. xxxvi.

ulterius, quod ad Argumentum Externum attinet, desiderari posse videatur; τὸ γὰρ τοσούτοις μάρτυσιν ἀντιτείνειν παραπληξίας ἐσχάρης: tot enim et tantis testibus refragari extremæ dementiæ est, ut loquitur Theoderetus Dialogo 1. Et tamen repertus est Blondellus, qui in præfatione rotundè dixerit, Sed plenam illis ipsis quas confictas putamus Epistolis fidem habuere Patres; *Quid tum?* Ain vero, *Quid tum?* Tum certè habemus Argumentum a testimoniis petatum de scripto Viri Apostolici Ecclesiastico locupletissimum firmissimúmque et quale numquam adhuc quenquam fefellit; neque si cætera respondeant, quæ in Argumento interno afferemus, fallere potuisse putandum est. Hoc ut dilucidius appareat, ex antè dictis nonnulla observabimus, et quam ea vim ad fidem faciendam habeant, tum ex testibus ipsis, tum ex ipsorum testimoniis perpendemus.—Ibid. cap. iii. p. 24.

NOTE (H.)

“ Thus I have represented the belief of St. Cyprian and his contemporaries, as to the Divine right of Episcopacy. The number of depositions, that this Divine right was then universally believed, is very great. It was the belief of all the Bishops, and by good consequence (all things considered) of all the Christians of Africa. It was the belief of Bishops, Clergy, and the people of Rome; the best evidence that can be expected of the common faith of the European; of Dionysius and Origen, two unexceptionable witnesses of the faith of the Egyptian; and of Alexander and of Firmilian, every way as famous witnesses of the belief of the Eastern or Asiatic Churches. It was, indeed, the belief of all persons, of all orders, degrees, ranks, and qualities. Bishops, Presbyters, Deacons, inferior Ministers, Martyrs, Confessors, persevering Christians, perfidious Lapsers, orthodox Believers, Heretics, Catholics, Schismatics, Clergy, Laics, learned, unlearned, &c. Not so much as one testimony in the monuments of that age to the contrary. No article of the Christian faith more unanimously, more uncontestedly, more universally received. I will be bold to challenge G. R. or any Presbyterian in Scotland, to produce one witness of whatsoever quality, I shall not

say formally deposing, but probably insinuating, that Prelacy was an human invention: an office introduced into the Church after the days or by a lesser authority than that of the Apostles."

"Shall I add another consideration of no small weight in this matter? 'Tis this: No age of the Church, assignable, wherein Christians closer adherents to Divine authority, or stricter observers of Divine institutions; or nicer requirers of Divine warrant, for every thing proposed to be received by them. Never age, wherein innovations more carefully guarded against; or human inventions more zealously rejected; or recessions from Divine appointments more religiously remonstrated against or repudiated. On all occasions, and in all controversies, our blessed martyr St. Cyprian (therein imitated by all his contemporaries, Stephen himself not excepted) recurs to Divine authority; requires Divine precept or warrant; rejects whatever is without it. He reprobates with keenness, and heights of indignation, the plea of custom in every case where a command cannot be produced. Indeed, he doth not allow them to be Christians who forsake Christ's institutions, and in their stead set up their own contrivances. I might easily fill some sheets with testimonies to this purpose: nor was it peculiar to him to be so nice and cautious in this matter: not one of his contemporaries otherwise minded. This I say, might be largely insisted on and most fully proved. But it is needless: not a page almost in the monuments of those times but affords copious evidence."

"Only one thing, therefore, I shall instance in. It is that which is our present concernment—the government of the Church. St. Cyprian is not more peremptory about any one thing, than that there ought to be no recession from Divine ordinance and institution, either in the constitution or the practice of it. This is the great argument he uses with his people, to oblige them to desert and disown Felicissimus and his complices; viz., that the Schismatical party was acting plainly contrary to God's ordinance, in stirring up the Martyrs and Confessors, and the Lapsers against the Bishop¹. And that for that party to absolve the Lapsers

¹ Hi fomenta olim quibusdam Confessoribus et hortamenta tribuebant, ne

without the Bishop, was a new tradition of sacrilegious institution, set up against the evangelical discipline: that, therefore, his people ought courageously and resolutely to reject the party, and carefully abstain from all communication with it. This same is likewise his great argument against the Roman Schismatics; those who did set up Novatianus, an Anti-Bishop, against the one true Bishop. He says, to do so was contrary to the evangelical law: and by consequence to set up another, that it is not a Christian, but an Antichristian Church. Or as he elsewhere words it, a Human Church, a Church of man's invention. So plain and peremptory was St. Cyprian against all innovations, even in the point of government: so careful was he to keep by Divine institution."—Bishop Sage's Vindication. p. 531. chapters 55, 56, 57.

NOTE (I.)

"Maximus was once a familiar friend of Gregory Nazianzen's, at such time as he was Bishop of Constantinople¹; and by him, having taken a good liking to him, admitted into the clergy of that Church. But Maximus being an ungrateful wretch, conspires with others like himself, to be made Bishop of that city: and thereupon negotiates with Peter, then Patriarch of Alexandria, to ordain him Bishop of the same; which being done accordingly (for Maximus was by birth of Egypt, and possibly might have good friends there, besides his money), and the whole city in a great distemper about the business: the whole cause came at last to be debated in the first general Council of Constantinople². Where on the full hearing of the matter it was thus decreed, viz., that Maximus neither was to be taken for a Bishop μήτε τοὺς παρ' αὐτοῦ χειροτονηθέντας, nor any of those he had ordained to be accounted of the Clergy, or remain in any order or degree thereof. Where note, that howsoever Maximus

concordarent cum Episcopo suo, nec Ecclesiasticam Disciplinam cum fide et quiete juxta præcepta Dominica continerent—Acne parum fuisset corrumpisse quorundam Confessorum mentes et contra Sacerdotium Dei portionem ruptæ fraternitatis armare.—Ep. 43, p. 82.

¹ Greg. Presb. in vita Nazian.

² Conc. Const. i. cap. 4.

came unlawfully unto the Bishoprick of Constantinople, by means whereof all the acts done by him as a Bishop were made void and frustrate: yet if as a Presbyter, to which degree he had been lawfully ordained by Nazianzen, he might give the imposition of hands; the Presbyters by him ordained, would have held good still."

"But the next case comes nearest to the business yet, as it is thus reported in the Council of Sevil¹ before remembered. A Bishop of the Church of Spain being troubled with sore eyes, and having some presented to him to be ordained Presbyters and Deacons, did only *lay his hands upon them*, suffering a Presbyter that stood by, to read the words of ordination. This coming to be scanned in the aforesaid Council, upon mature deliberation, it is thus determined. First, for the Presbyter which assisted, that for his boldness and presumption, he had been subject to the Council's censure, but that he was before deceased: next for the Presbyter and Deacons, who were so ordained, that they should actually be deposed from all sacred orders, concluding thus, "*Tales enim merito judicati sunt removendi, quia prave inventi sunt constituti*," that they were worthily adjudged to lose those orders, which they had wrongfully received. So little influence had the Presbyters in the essential parts of ordination, as that their bare reading of the words (though required to it by the Bishop) was adjudged enough, not only to make them liable to the Church's censure, but also for their sakes to make void the action. Nay, so severe and punctual was the Church herein, that whereas certain Bishops of those times, whether consulting their own ease, or willing to decline so great a burthen, had suffered their chorepiscopi, as well those which were simply Presbyters, as such as had Episcopal ordination (for two there were) to perform this office; it was forbidden absolutely in the one, limited and restrained in the other sort, as by the canons of the two ancient Synods of Gangra and Antioch² doth at full appear."—Heylyn. chap. iv. part i. page 227.

¹ Concil. Hisp. ii. cap. 5.

² Concil. Gangrens. can. 13. Concil. Antioch. i. can. 10.

(NOTE J.)

“From the testimonies of particular persons, I will proceed to the testimony of whole churches. I will begin with the Apostolical canons, which (as Dr. Beveridge has learnedly proved in his Annotations on them) were constitutions made by diverse councils held in the second and third centuries. They tell us that ¹ a Bishop shall be ordained by two or three Bishops; and a Presbyter and Deacon by one Bishop ². That a Bishop, Priest, or Deacon, must not put away his wife under pretence of religion ³. That a Bishop, Priest, or Deacon, ought not to involve himself in secular affairs ⁴. That a Priest or Deacon leaving the diocese to which he belongs, and going into another to dwell there, without the consent of his Bishop, and being required by his Bishop to return, will not, shall be excommunicated. Indeed, almost all these canons, which are eighty-five in number, have something in them shewing Bishops and Presbyters to be distinct orders. The Council of Eliberis, A.D. 305, mentions the three orders of the clergy in several canons ⁵. It forbids Bishops, Priests, and Deacons to leave their churches to exercise merchandise. It declares ⁶, that when any person falls sick, he ought to be received into communion by the Bishop; but if the sickness be violent, the Priest may grant him communion, and even the Deacon, if the Bishop command him. The Council of Arles, A.D. 314 ⁷, forbids one Bishop alone to ordain another, and then immediately subjoins that neither Priests nor Deacons should relinquish the churches in which they were fixed by ordination; that is, the diocese in which they were ordained. The general Council of Nice also, some few years after this of Arles, makes a most apparent distinction between the orders of Bishop and Priest, especially where it expressly ordains ⁸ that neither Priests nor Deacons shall be received into another Church without the consent of their Bishop.”

“The Novatians which returned to the communion in their re-

¹ Can. 2.

² Can. 5.

³ Can. 6.

⁴ Can. 15.

⁵ Can. 18.

⁶ Can. 32.

⁷ Can. 20, 21.

⁸ Can. 16.

cantation and confession, said these words: '*We are not ignorant that there is one God and Christ, one Holy Ghost, one Bishop in one Church.*'"

"The Council of Laodicea, A.D. 321, Can. 41, That no clergyman ought to travel without the consent of his Bishop. And Can. 56. That the Presbyter ought not to go into the Church and sit in their seats till the Bishop come, and go in with the Bishop."

"The Council of Gangra, A.D. 326. If any have private meetings out of the Church without their Presbyter be with them, let them be anathematized by the sentence of the Bishop. And Can. 7. If any will take or give of the fruits offered to the Church, without leave of the Bishop, let him be anathema."

"The Council of Antioch, A.D. 341, Can. 3. If any Presbyter or Deacon, leaving his own parish shall go to another, and refuse to return when his own Bishop shall summon him, let him be deposed. And Can. 22. That a Bishop ought not to ordain Presbyters or Deacons in another Bishop's diocese without his leave."

"The second great general Council at Constantinople, A.D. 381, ranks those with heretics who, though they profess the true faith, yet run into schism, and gather Congregations apart from, and in opposition to our canonical Bishops."—Brett. Chap. 5, page 81.

(NOTE K.)

The following are some of Bishop Maddox's observations on that widely circulated dissenting work, Neale's History of the Puritans:—

"Mr. N. is extremely fond of a parity among the Clergy, and has taken too much pains in that cause. It was an excess of zeal to press the pious reformers and King Edward's ordinal into this service. The committee (says he) soon finished their ordinal, which is almost the same with that now in use: they take no notice in their book of the lower orders in the church of Rome, as Subdeacons, Readers, Acolytes, &c. but confine themselves to Bishops, Priests, and Deacons; and here it is observable that the form of ordaining a Priest and a Bishop is *the same*, there being no express mention in the words of ordination whether it be for the one or the other office. This has been altered of late years,

since a distinction of the two orders has been so generally admitted ; but *that was not the received doctrine of these times.*" Thus again : " We may observe (says he) from the history of this reign (King Edward's), that the first reformers believed but too orders of churchmen in Holy Scripture, viz. Bishops and Deacons ; and consequently the Bishops and Priests were but different ranks or degrees of the same order." In like manner elsewhere : " Our first reformers admitted but two orders of Church officers, to be of Divine appointment, viz. Bishops and Deacons ; a Presbyter and Bishop, according to them, being but two names for the same office." " By this account it is plain Mr. N. would have it believed that Bishop and Priest were, in the opinion of the first reformers, synonymous terms, signifying not only the same order, but the same office too ; being, as he says, but two names of the *same office*. His material proof is the public ordinal ; and, to be sure, if any where the reformers speak distinctly, it is when they are designedly treating upon this subject, and appointing the very forms of ordination and consecration. Here then we join issue, and both appeal to the same ordinal as a decisive proof.

Mr. N.'s assertion, page 82, is in these words : " The first reformers believed but two orders of Churchmen in Holy Scripture, viz. Bishops and Deacons." The very same reformers, in the very same ordinal he refers to, make the following express declaration :—

" It is evident unto all men, diligently reading Holy Scripture, and ancient authors, that from the Apostles' time there have been these orders of Ministers in Christ's Church, Bishops, Priests, and Deacons."

" Without stopping for one reflection, let us go on to his next assertion, which runs thus."—Maddox's Vindication, p. 59, 60.

The Bishop proceeds further to refute Neale's assertion, but the reader will not require the argument to be pursued.

(NOTE L.)

The following are the passages referred to in the text :—

The learned Hooker thus states the controversy : " The inequality which they (the anti-episcopalians) complain of is, that

one minister of the word and sacraments should have a permanent superiority above another ; or, in any sort, a superiority of power mandatory, judicial, and coercive over other ministers : by us, on the contrary side, inequality, as unto Bishops, being ministers of the word and sacraments, granteth a superiority permanent above ministers ; yea, a permanent superiority of power mandatory, judicial, and coercive over them, is maintained a thing lawful and good : for one pastor hath superiority of power above another, when either some are authorized to do things worthier than are permitted to all ; or some are preferred to be *principal* agents, the rest agents with dependency and subordination." Alluding to the concession of Calvin, that *Bishops in the ancient Church were as much superior to Presbyters as the Consuls of the year in ancient Rome to the body of Senators*, Hooker says, "This is as much as we require."—Eccl. Polit. book vii. sec. iii.

Let us next hear Bishop Bilson thus addressing the advocates of parity : "First allow to the Bishop the right and authority due to him by Divine right, and then add, as his associates, whomsoever ye are entitled." *Primum episcopi jus et auctoritatem, divino jure debitam concedite, deinde quoscunque debetis, ei socios adjungite.* De perp. ecc. guber. p. 360.

The following are the words of Dr. Field, "We make not the power of Bishops to be princely, but fatherly ; so that as the Presbyters may do nothing without the Bishop, so he may do nothing without their presence and advice."—Lib. v. 27. p. 499.

The learned Thorndike thus writes, "By the appointment of the Apostles the body of Christians contained in each city, and the territories thereof, is to constitute a several Church, to be governed by one chief ruler, called a Bishop, with Presbyters, or Priests, subordinate to him for his advice and assistance, and Deacons to minister and excite their appointment."—See epilogue to the tragedy of the Church of England, 1659. book 3. chap. 16. p. 145.

The opinion of Barrow, expressed in his celebrated treatise on the Pope's supremacy, is to the same effect. "At first each Church was settled apart, under its own Bishops and Presbyters, and every Bishop, as a prince, in his own Church, did act freely

according to his will and discretion (that is, without dependence on any superior) with the advice of his ecclesiastical Synod," or college, "of Presbyters."

Stillingfleet in his reply to Baxter speaks very plainly on this subject, and describes that leader of the Non-conformists, "running upon this perpetual mistake, that the English Episcopacy is not a succession to the ordinary part of the Apostolic power in governing Churches, but a new kind of Episcopacy, not heard of in the ancient Church, which swallows up the whole power of the Presbytery, and leaves them only a bare name of Curates."—See Unreasonableness of Separation, part iii. sect. xi.

Sherlock, in his defence of Stillingfleet, speaks the same language with that distinguished vindicator of the Church, and states the question between the Episcopalian and the anti-Episcopalian to be this:—"Whether Christ and his Apostles instituted a parity or an imparity of officers in the Church? whether Bishops and Presbyters be equal? or whether Bishops have a superior power, office, order, or degree, call it what you please, over Presbyters?" He elsewhere says:—"We may easily observe in ancient writers, (who acknowledge the Episcopal pre-eminence) that they used to denote the governors of the Church by one common name. For though the authority of Bishops and Presbyters is very different, yet they both have authority in the Church; and, therefore, when the ancients were not concerned to distinguish the different degrees of power, they included them both in one common name, as joint governors of the Church."—pp. 345. 359.

We may refer lastly to the ablest of all asserters of Episcopal pre-eminence. "From the Epistles of St. Paul themselves," says Bishop Pearson, "what we affirm is plainly manifest, namely, that "in particular Churches certain peculiar and special persons were placed over all the co-equal Presbyters, with a jurisdiction over the previously appointed, and that those peculiar and special persons were placed by the Apostle Paul himself, with greater and pre-eminent power, over those Presbyters whom he himself had invested with an equal power." *Quippe ex ipsis Sancti Pauli epistolis id quod a nostris asseritur liquide constat; nempe in particularibus ecclesiis singulares aliquos et speciales viros præ-*

positos fuisse omnibus presbyteris inter se æqualibus cum jurisdictione supra illos presbyteros prius ordinatos; illosque singulares et speciales viros ab ipso Apostolo Paulo iis presbyteris quos ipse pari cum potestate instituerat, cum majori et exorti potestate super impositos fuisse.—De Succ. prim. Romæ episc.

NOTE (M.)

A letter of Dr. Peter de Moulin the son, Prebendary of Christ Church, Canterbury, one of His Majesty's chaplains, touching a passage for Episcopacy, written by Mr. David Blondel, in his *Apologia pro Hieronymi Sententiâ*, but left out at the entreaty of the Presbyterians.

“MY REVEREND BROTHER,

“To cast my mite into that rich treasury which you are now furnishing, I must inform you of a remarkable passage very pertinent to your purpose. In the year 1651, that great and good man, my Lord Primate Usher, told me that the learned Mr. David Blondel had concluded his *Apologia pro Hieronymo* with the words to this purpose: *By all that we have said to assert the rights of the Presbytery, we do not intend to invalidate the ancient and Apostolical constitution of Episcopal pre-eminence. But we believe that wheresoever it is established conformably to the ancient canons it must be carefully preserved, and wheresoever by some heat of contention or otherwise it hath been put down or violated, it ought to be reverently restored.* The good Primate told me besides, that whereas the book had been written at the earnest request of the assembly of Westminster, of the Scots especially, who had their agents and leaguers in Paris to strengthen their party by misinforming the Protestants of France, and winning them to their side. When these agents saw this conclusion of Mr. Blondel's manuscript, they expostulated with him very loud for marring all the good he had done in his book, disappointing the expectation of the assembly, and showing himself an enemy instead of a friend to their holy covenant. This they urged upon him with such vehemency and unwearied importunity, that they prevailed with him to put out that conclusion. Having received that information from a person of so much knowledge

and integrity, as that famous Prelate, yet for a further confirmation, I told it to Mr. John Blondel, (David's brother,) then living in London, who denied that there was any truth in that report, and defended his brother as much wronged by it. 'If you think' (said I) 'that I wrong your brother, complain to him of me in your next letter, and remember my kind service to him.' Mr. John Blondel did not fail to write to his brother about this; and three or four weeks after showed me a letter from him, wherein he remembered his love to me, and acknowledged that the relation was true.

"This advice I thought myself obliged to give you, knowing that no man can make a better use of it than yourself, to whose holy labours about this point, the Church is so much indebted, and none more your debtor in the Church, in that regard, than,

"Sir,

"Your most affectionate

"Brother and Servant,

"PETER DU MOULIN."

The following are some of the passages from Blondel referred to in the text :

Hinc extremæ, ut compugnantia, sic falsa de Episcopatu sentientium opiniones emeruerunt, dum alii qui rem ipsam à vitiis adnatis nequaquam distinguunt, nec meminisse dignantur, ὡς οὐδεὶς ταχέως καὶ ἄθροον ἐπὶ τὴν κακίαν ἐπιπεδῶ¹, primam illam electorum κατ' ἐκκλησίαν presbyterorum, qui postea restricto vocabuli usu Episcopi dicti sunt, à sanctis Dei Martyribus promanentem institutionem, ut purum putum Antichristianismum (præter meritum) exhorrent, nec sine corruptelis, quas primis institutoribus imputare audent, extitisse unquam putant.—Præf. p. 50.

Cum igitur suo res quæque pretio æstimanda veniat, Episcopatum (qua presbyterio supereminet) verus ac proprius honor manere debet, ut Ecclesiastica institutio (quod revera est) habeatur.—Præf. p. 51.

To these quotations from the preface, others may be added from the body of the work. Thus (p. 53.) he tells us that the

¹ Chryst. in Matt. Hom. 87.

non-episcopal model of Church polity which he contends for, was not designed by the Apostles to be unchangeable, but was delivered "ut mutabilem et pro usu ac arbitrio ecclesiæ mutandam."

In page 193 this learned author proceeds; "At (inquires) eminentiores a canonibus veterique more factos presbyteros, divinitus instituto munere in Ecclesiâ fungi, negari non potest: Assentior lubens; unicus enim ubique est, fuitque ab initio Christianorum Episcopatus, quem Christi (sive revera sive in speciem) servi, non quâ ὑπερέχοντες collegarum præsules, et presbyteriorum præpositi, sed quâ presbyteri, πρεσβυτερίῳ ἐγκαταλεχθέντες, presbyteriorum albo adscripti administrarunt; ut ἐπισκοπῇ per se considerata, ad Ecclesiarum regimen absolutè, ἐπισκοπῇ annexa ὑπεροχῇ ad regiminis modum solamque εὐταξίαν pertineat; quam suo semper arbitrio permissam seculorum omnium credit Ecclesia: nec opus sit vel ad triplicis Episcopatus (divini scilicet, humani, et satanici) distinctionem quæ fratrum nostrorum antè annos circiter 50 quadam teneritudine (ut Auxiliaris præfecti ¹ de Romanis verbis utar) plus trahi solitas aures Aerius pupugit, confugere; vel quicquid humana Christum profitentium consuetudo in divinorum usu ausa est, nefas putare: cum ² lege fidei manente cætera jam disciplinæ et conversationis admittere novitatem correctionis, suasque in rebus hujusmodi Christianæ prudentiæ partes obire licere in confesso sit; nec ulla (etiam nunc) Ecclesia in exemplum trahi possit, quæ ex generali hoc divini juris ³ præcepto πάντα εὐσχημόνως καὶ κατὰ τάξιν γινέσθω, quæcunque et decentiora et commodiora sequendi plenam sibi potestatem factam non censeat."

For further passages to the same effect see p. 54. 157. 364.

NOTE (N.)

The followers of Blondel are commonly obliged to make concessions point by point as represented in the text; but their great master foresaw at once, that unless he gave his prime Presbyters a very close resemblance to Bishops, his system would

¹ Vita Hilarii Arelat.

² Tertull. de Virg. Vel. c. 1.

³ 1 Cor. xiv. 40.

be beset with difficulties that he might be unprepared for, (*improvisis difficultatibus*, *pref.* p. 7.) He affirms, therefore, that prime Presbyters existed in the Church from the very beginning, under the auspices of the Apostles. He allows that they not only had a constant precedence, but exercised *authority* over the Presbyters; declaring that the right of presiding without the right of exercising authority, is an absurdity unworthy of a child to mention: (*pueris ludibrium*, p. 37.) He declares that Bishops were not elected to their office by the Presbyters, but succeeded by seniority, and held the station for life. He calls their jurisdiction a peculiar pre-eminent power (*singularis quædam et exors potestas*;) a power in which they could have no colleagues, but successors only: (*præf.* p. 35.) He calls his prime Presbyter a prince or captain of his brethren (*fratrum ἑταῖρος*.) He admits that our Saviour, in his Epistles to the seven Churches of Asia, addressed the prime Presbyters, and made them responsible for the conduct of the Churches under their primacy or prime Presbyterian jurisdiction. (*præf.* p. 6.) And finally, he concedes that the prime Presbyter acquired Episcopal prerogatives towards the middle of the second century, at Jerusalem, A.D. 135 or 136, at Alexandria, A.D. 143, and at Rome about A.D. 140. In short Blondel explicitly declares that he is no *Aerian*: and labours no point more anxiously than to vindicate St. Jerome (whom he follows) from the charge of maintaining the Aerian heresy.—See especially his Preface. p. 59.

Salmasius, next to Blondel, the most learned supporter of Presbyterian discipline, and the most frequently appealed to by Anti-episcopalian writers, thinks it necessary to admit the still earlier origin of Episcopacy, and repeatedly declares that Bishops existed from the beginning, the Apostolic age itself alone excepted. *Sciunt rem esse antiquissimam, ut duo hi ordines in ecclesiâ fuerint distincti, episcoporum et presbyterorum, si excipiantur apostolica tempora.* (*Walo. Messalin.* p. 7.) Mentioning elsewhere (p. 181.) the change from the Presbyterian to the Episcopal form of polity, he dates it after the death of the Apostles, Peter and Paul, *post Apostolorum Petri et Pauli obitum*; and though he adds, *haud statim*, not immediately, yet we can

hardly suppose that he refers to any period later than the death of St. John; though he certainly would not allow that the change took place under the sanction of that Apostle. For further passages to the same effect, see pp. 117. 119. 144. 177. 248. 283. 419.

(NOTE O.)

"His institution of the Lord's prayer tells us that he held conformity with the Church in the public exercises of religion. They that are of opinion that the Lord's prayer was not given for a form to be used '*totidem verbis*,'—that it is not fit to be joined with our prayers,—that it is not fit to be said by all, because all may not call God '*our Father*;'—did they but clearly see, in what conformity to the practice in the Jewish Church, both the prayer was given, and every petition and phrase in it doth go, they would be of another opinion, if they be not espoused to their own."

"The surest and safest construction of phrases and passages in the New Testament is not by framing a sense of our own, which we think fair and probable, but by observing how such phrases and passages were understood by them to whom they were then uttered, according to the common use and signification of such phrases and passages, in the vulgar sense and use of the nation. It is not what conceits or constructions we can mint out of our invention, to maintain the opinions about this prayer, that I mentioned before; but it is best to cast, how the disciples, to whom it was given, did or could conceive of it, upon such observations on it as these."

"They knew that such forms of prayer were usual in the nation: that such forms were given by masters to their scholars, to be used '*verbatim*:' that such were to be subjoined to their other prayers: that the most common title, whereby the whole nation called God, was '*our Father which art in Heaven*:' that every petition in this prayer was such as was also usual in the nation: so that they saw that Christ had given this prayer directly according to the custom, style, and form of the nation, and that he had given no exception to them about it. Therefore, how

could they understand or conceive of it, according to the common custom of the nation in such cases, but that it was to be used 'in terminis,' and to be joined to their prayers?"

(NOTE P.)

The dialogue adverted to is carried on between a country gentleman and a minister of God's word, and has, at page 3, the following strange aspersion on the occasional omission of the doxology in our prayer-book.

GENT.—The conclusion, *For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory for ever*, is left out almost every time : ought it to be left out ?

MRN.—No, verily ; the leaving of it out, as superfluous, is a controuling of our Saviour Christ, who in his wisdom thought fit to put it in.

GENT.—Saint Luke doth leave it out, Chap. xi. 4 ; therefore the service-booke may leave it.

MIN.—Not so ; for Saint Luke was but a penman to write what Christ commanded : therefore not St. Luke but Christ did leave it out.

GENT.—Why did Christ leave it out ?

MIN.—Because it was sufficient that he had caused St. Matthew to put it in. Mat. vi. 13.

GENT.—Why doth the service-booke leave it out ?

MIN.—Because the masse-booke doth leave it out.

GENT.—Why doth the masse-booke leave it out ?

MIN.—Because Anti-Christ, the Pope, will leave none of his Church (neither Priest nor people) to give so much honour and glory unto God.

NOTE (Q.)

"St. Peter's custody of the keys was a temporary, not a perpetual authority. Its object was not individuals, but the whole human race. The kingdom of heaven upon earth is the true Church of God. It is now, therefore, the Christian Church. Formerly the Jewish Church was that kingdom. The true Church is represented in this text, as in many passages of holy writ,

under the image of a walled city, to be entered only at the gates. Under the Mosaic economy these gates were shut, and particular persons only could obtain admittance,—Israelites by birth, or by legal incorporation. The locks of these gates were the rites of the Mosaic law, which obstructed the entrance of aliens. But after our Lord's ascension, and the descent of the Holy Ghost, the keys of the city were given to St. Peter, by that vision which taught him, and authorized him to teach others, that all distinctions of one nation from another were at end. By virtue of this special commission, the great Apostle applied the key, pushed back the bolt of the lock, and threw the gates of the city open for the admission of the whole Gentile world, in the instance of Cornelius and his family. To this, and to this only, our Lord prophetically alludes, when he promises to St. Peter the custody of the keys.—No authority over the rest of the Apostles was given to St. Peter, by the promise made to him, in either or in both its branches; nor was any right conveyed to him which could descend from him to his successors in any see. The promise was, indeed, simply a prediction, that he would be selected to be the first instrument in a great work of Providence, which was of such a nature as to be done once for all; and being done, it cannot be repeated. The great Apostle fulfilled his commission in his life-time. He applied his key—he turned back the lock, he loosed and he bound. The gates of the kingdom of heaven *are* thrown open—the ceremonial law *is* abrogated—the moral *is* confirmed; and the successors of St. Peter in the see of Rome can give neither furtherance nor obstruction to the business."—*Bishop Horsley's Sermons*, vol. i. pp. 293—296.

NOTE (R.)

"That our Lord really referred to this declaration of Peter, relating to his own Divine dignity, as being the true *rock*, on which he would build his Church, is established beyond contradiction by our Lord himself, in the clear distinction which he maintained between the stone (*πέτρος petros*) and the rock (*πέτρα petra*) by the accurate grammatical terms in which both these words are expressly recorded. For whatsoever may have been the language in which they were really spoken,

perhaps in Chaldee or Syriac, yet in this point the Greek record is our only authoritative instructor. The first word, *πέτρος*, being a masculine noun, signifies merely a *stone*; and the second word, *πέτρα*, though it is a feminine noun, cannot signify any thing of less magnitude and importance than a *rock*, or strong mountain of defence. The true meaning of the name was at first declared by our Lord to be Cephass, a stone: and a learned commentator, Edward Leigh, Esq., asserts, that *πέτρος* doth always signify a stone, never a rock."—*Critica Sacra*, p. 325.

"With respect to the first, the word *πέτρος*, *petros* in its higher figurative sense of a *stone*, when applied to Peter, can represent only one true believer, or faithful member of Christ's Church; that is, one out of the great multitude of true believers in Christ, who as figurative stones, form altogether the glorious spiritual building of Christ's Church, and not the foundation on which that Church is built; because the figurative character cannot, consistently with truth, be applied to any other person than to God or to Christ alone. And though even Christ himself is sometimes, in Holy Scripture, called a stone (*λίθος*, but not *πέτρος*), yet whenever this figurative expression is applied to him, it is always with such a clear distinction of superiority over all other figurative stones, as will not admit the least idea of any vicarial stone to be substituted in his place; as, for instance, He is called "the head stone of the corner," (Psal. cxxiii. 22.)—"in Zion a precious corner stone," (Isa. xxviii. 16.) by whom alone the other living stones of the spiritual house are rendered "acceptable to God;" as St. Peter himself (previous to his citation of that text of Isaiah) has clearly declared in his address to the Churches, dispersed throughout Pontus, Galacia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia; wherein he manifestly explains that very text of Isaiah as follows:—"Ye also" (says the Apostle) "as living stones, are built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God, by" (or through) "Jesus Christ;" (1 Pet. ii. 5.) thus plainly acknowledging the true foundation on which the other living stones of the primitive Catholic Church were built, in order to render them acceptable to God as "a holy priesthood."

And the Apostle then proceeds (in the very next verse) to his

citation of the above mentioned text from Isaiah, "Wherefore also" (says he, ver. 6.) "it is contained in the Scripture, Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect, precious; and he that believeth on him; (*ἐπ' αὐτῷ* on him that is, on Jesus Christ, the only chief corner stone) shall not be confounded. Unto you, therefore, which believe, (he) is precious; (or an honour; as rendered in the margin); but unto them which be disobedient, he, (*ὁ*, also) the stone which the builders disallowed, the same (*οὗτος*—for there is no other person that can be entitled to this supreme distinction in the Church) is made the head of the corner."

"And a due consideration of the second noun *πέτρα*, a rock, will produce exactly the same effect; that is, it will demonstrate that the supreme title of the rock, which in other texts of Holy Scripture, is applied to Jehovah, or God alone (as I have already shown) most certainly was not intended by our Lord to be understood as applicable to his disciple Peter; but only to that true testimony, which St. Peter had just before declared, concerning the Divine dignity of the Messiah; 'Thou art the Christ the Son of the living God.'"

"I have already remarked that *πέτρα*, (a rock) is a feminine noun; and a clear distinction is maintained between *πέτρος* the masculine noun in this text, and the said feminine noun *πέτρα*, the rock, by the grammatical terms in which the latter, in its relatives and articles, is expressed, which are all regularly feminine throughout the whole sentence; and thereby they demonstrate that our Lord did not intend that the new appellation, or nominal distinction, which he had just before given to Simon, (*viz.* *πέτρος*, the masculine noun in the beginning of the sentence) should be construed as the character of which he spoke in the next part of the sentence; for, if he had really intended that construction, the same masculine noun must necessarily have been repeated in the next part of the sentence with a masculine pronoun; wherein, on the contrary, not only the gender is changed from the masculine to the feminine, but also the figurative character itself, which is as much superior, in dignity to the Apostle Simon, and also to his new appellative *πέτρα*, as a rock is superior to a mere stone.

For the word *πέτρος* cannot signify anything more than a stone ; so that the Popish application to Peter, as the foundation of Christ's Church, is not only inconsistent with the real meaning of the appellative, which Christ, at that very time, conferred upon him, and with the necessary grammatical construction of it, but also with the figurative importance of the other word, the rock ; upon this rock ; the declared foundation of the Church, a title of dignity, which (as I have already shown by several texts of Scripture) is applicable only to God, or to Christ.

"And be pleased to observe further, that the application of this supreme title (the rock) to Peter, is inconsistent (above all) with the plain reference to the preceding context made by our Lord, in the beginning of this very verse.—'And I also say unto thee,' which manifestly points out (both by the copulative 'and,' and the connective adverb 'also') the inseparable connection of this verse with the previous declaration of Peter, concerning our Lord's Divine dignity in the preceding sentence ; 'Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God,' and thereby demonstrates that our Lord's immediate reply ('And I also say unto thee' &c.,) did necessarily include this declaration of Peter, as being the principal object of the sentence,—the true foundation or rock, on which alone the Catholic Church can be properly built ; because our faith in Christ (that he is truly 'the Son of the living God') is unquestionably the only security, or rock of our salvation."—Remarks on Matt. xvi. 18. by Granville Sharp, Esq.—Cited by Dr. Adam Clarke in his Commentary.

(NOTE S.)

"You say such a thing is *lanful* ; we say it is *unlanful* : the minds of the people are doubtful and wavering between your *lanful* and our *unlanful*. Let no man believe either *you* or *us* ; we are all contentious men. We must seek therefore for judges between us. If Christians are to be our judges, both sides will not afford such. We must seek for a judge abroad. If he be a Pagan, he cannot know the secrets of Christianity ; if he be a Jew, he is an enemy to Christian baptism. Therefore there is no judgment of this matter can be found on earth. We must seek

for a judge from heaven. But to what end do we solicit heaven, when we have here in the gospel a will and testament? And because here we may fitly compare earthly things with heavenly; the case is just as if a man had many sons: while he is present with them, he commands every one what he will have done; and there is no need as yet of making his last will. So also Christ, as long as he was present on earth, (though neither now is he wanting) for a time commanded his Apostles whatsoever was necessary; but just as an earthly father, when he feels his death approaching, fearing lest after his death the brothers should fall out and quarrel, calls in witnesses, and translates his will from his dying heart into written tables that will continue long after him. Now if any controversy arises among the brothers, they do not go to his tomb, but consult his last will; and thus he, while he rests in his grave, does speak to them in those silent tables as if he were alive. He, whose testament we have, is in heaven; therefore, we are to inquire his pleasure in the Gospel, as in his last will and testament."

Vos dicitis, licet; nos, non licet. Inter vestrum licet, et nostrum non licet, nutant et remigant animæ populorum. Nemo vobis credat, nemo nobis; omnes contentiosi homines sumus. Quærendi sunt iudices: si Christiani, de utrâque parte dari non possunt: de foris quærendus est iudex. Si Paganus, non potest nosse Christiana secreta: si Judæus, inimicus est Christiani baptismatis. Ergo in terris de hac re nullum poterit reperiri iudicium: de cælo quærendus est iudex. Sed quid pulsamus cælum, cum habeamus hic in evangelio testamentum? Quia hoc loco recte possunt terrena cælestibus comparari; tale est, quod quivis hominum habens numerosos filios, his quamdiu præsens est, ipse imperat singulis, non est adhuc necessarium testamentum. Sic et Christus, quamdiu præsens in terris fuit (quamvis nec modo desit) pro tempore quicquid necessarium erat, Apostolis imperavit. Sed quo modo terrenus pater, cum se in confiniis senserit mortis, timens ne post mortem suam ruptâ pace litigent fratres, adhibitis testibus voluntatem suam de pectore morituro transfert in tabulas duraturas; ei si fuerit inter fratres contentio nata, non itur ad tumultum, sed quæritur testamentum, et qui in tumulo quiescit, tacitus de tabulis loquitur vivis.

Is cujus est testamentum, in cælo est : Ergo voluntas ejus velut in testamento, sic in evangelio inquiratur.—*Optatus Melevitanus.* lib. 5. *ad princip.*

“It is plain from hence,” says Chillingworth, “that he knew not of any living, speaking, audible judge, furnished with authority and infallibility, to decide this controversy. Had he known any such, assisted with the Spirit of God for this purpose, it had been horrible impiety against God and the Church’s peace to say there was none such ; or the Spirit of God was not able by his assistance to keep this judge from being hindered with partiality from seeing the truth. Had he thought the Bishop of Rome speaking *ex cathedrâ* to be his judge, now had been the time to have said so ; but he says directly the contrary, and therefore it is plain he knew of no such authority to be had.”

“Neither is there the like reason for a Judge, finally, and with authority to determine controversies in religion, as in civil differences ; for if the controversy be about *mine* and *thine*, about land or money, or any other thing, it is impossible that both I and my adversary should hold the possession of it ; and one of us must do injury to the other. But in matters of doctrine, I may hold my opinion, and do my adversary no wrong ; and my adversary may hold his and do me none.”—Chillingworth’s Works (Discourses,) pp. 145, 146.

NOTE (T.)

“What will you say, when we are so far from assurance, as to the Pope’s being legally chosen, that we have, if not great evidence, yet very high presumptions of the contrary ; what becomes then of your Pope’s infallibility ? Nay, from the illegality of one, follows the illegality of all his successors, because they were chosen by Cardinals, made by him : who could be no lawful Cardinals, because he was no legal Pope, and consequently not they who were made by them. The case is this ; ‘There is a Bull of Pope Julius the Second, against the simoniacal election of any Pope, which the Cardinals, upon their first entrance into the Conclave, swear solemnly to observe. In which Bull it is expressly said, that if any Pope be simoniacally chosen by any of

the Cardinals, upon any gift or promise whatsoever, that such an election is ipso facto null; and the Cardinals may oppose one so chosen, as if guilty of manifest heresy; and that none ought to receive or look on such a one as Pope; neither can this simoniacal election be made good by inthronization, course of time, submission of Cardinals, &c. And that they ought all to avoid him as a magician, heathen, publican, or the founder of heresie. This is the substance of that Bull. Now it is notoriously known, that Sixtus the Fifth, was simoniacally chosen Pope. For, that he might be chosen, he did under his hand promise to Cardinal d'Este, who had a great interest in the Conclave, that in the time of his Popedome, he would never create Jerome Matthew, the Cardinal's great enemy, a Cardinal: upon which promise he was through his interest chosen Pope. But, when afterwards the Pope violated his faith to him, by creating his enemy Cardinal, d'Este being highly incensed against him for it, sent the very instrument subscribed by the Pope's own hand, to Philip the Second, King of Spain, who in the year 1589, sent the Duke of Suisse extraordinary ambassador to Rome, to intimate to Sixtus the Fifth, his intention of calling a General Council, according to the Bull of Julius the Second, for declaring this simoniacal election. When this message was delivered to the Pope, and he saw the instrument was discovered under his own hand, he fell into such a perplexity, that he dyed soon after, which stopt the progress of the business. By this it evidently appears, that Sixtus himself was no lawful Pope, and therefore could create no Cardinals: and because the Cardinals created by him, had a voice in the election of the subsequent Popes, it follows, that there hath been no legal Pope since Sixtus the Fifth. For after the death of Sixtus, Cardinal Montalto his nephew, with forty votes entered the Conclave, and chose Urban the Seventh, who lived but a few days; after him Gregory the Fourteenth, who was Pope but ten months: after him Innocentius the Ninth, who continued but two months; after him Clement the Eighth, who outlived the election thirteen years. But not to inquire any further into the irregular election, and the simoniacal bargains of Paul the Fifth, after the death of Clement, this certainly may suffice

to let men see, what becomes of their faith, when they pin it upon the Pope's sleeve. For, if we are to rely upon his infallible testimony, and he so far from being infallible, that by their own constitutions he was no Pope, nor to be looked on as other than a magician, heathen, and heretick, is not our faith then settled on a sure foundation?"—Bishop Stillingfleet's *Vindication*. Part i. page 116, 117.

NOTE (U.)

"The divines of the Roman Church may be every day seen to rend one another, although they all live in one and the same communion. They acknowledge one another for brethren, they assist at the same altars, they call upon the same saints, and yet nevertheless, they write one against another, after the most passionate and violent manner. One sort of them say of their adversaries, 'That they were infected with heresies, and were enemies of the Apostolic See, and that their opinion was full of perfidiousness, presumptuous, injurious to the state of the religious, and savoured of Calvinism; and that to speak plainly, it was erroneous in the faith, that it openly stifled the word of God, and the authority of the Fathers, that it was blasphemous against Jesus Christ and all the saints, plainly and evidently heretical, and contrary to the Council of Trent.' The others say on the contrary—'that the propositions of their opponents are false, rash, presumptuous, pernicious to all the faithful, injurious to the Bishops, contrary to the word of God and the authority of the Councils,'" &c.—*Claude's Defence*. vol. i. p. 287.

"They commissioned some divines to make abstracts of the books of the Protestants, that they might know what propositions were to be condemned. Nothing was found in the writings of the Lutherans, but out of the books of the Zuinglians they drew eight propositions. 1. That in predestination and reprobation man has no hand, but only the will and pleasure of God. 2. That the predestinate cannot be damned, nor the reprobate saved. 3. That the elect alone are justified. 4. That the justified ought to have faith, and believe that they are predestinated. 5. That the justified cannot fall from grace. 6. That the reprobate do never

receive grace. 7. That a man ought to believe that he shall persevere, when he is in grace. 8. That a justified man ought to believe, that, though he fall, he shall rise again."

"Most part of the divines thought, that the first proposition was very sound and Catholic, to wit, that in predestination and reprobation, the will of God alone does all: that is to say, they approved absolute and gratuitous predestination, and they pretended that it was not only consonant to the judgment of St. Thomas, but also to that of Scotus. This opinion was supported by a great number of authorities from Holy Scripture, and the Fathers, particularly St. Austin, who in his old age had vigorously maintained this absolute and free predestination: yet the election by foreknowledge of works found its champions. The Bishops of Bitonto and Sulpi put themselves at the head of the Monks, and made a party against free and absolute predestination. They said that God resolved to give all men sufficient grace, and that in the foreknowledge of God, election and reprobation depended on the good or bad use of that sufficient grace; because God elected those whom he had foreknown would consent to and accept of that grace, and reprobated those that would reject it; they added that the contrary opinion was cruel and inhuman, that it made God unjust and an accepter of persons, and supposed him to make his choice without any reason, but out of mere fancy.

"Ambrosio Catarino was of their opinion, who grounded predestination on the foreknowledge of works; and to avoid the force of the texts of Scripture which prove free and absolute predestination, he made use of a ridiculous medium: he made two predestinations, the one certain, effectual, and absolute, without the foreknowledge of works, saying that predestination extended only to a small number, whom God absolutely decrees to save, and for whom, in order to that, he prepares effectual means: to that election he applied all the passages whereby absolute predestination is proved. As for instance, those of the ninth chapter of the epistle to the Romans, where St. Paul says, that God loved Jacob and hated Esau, before either of them had done good or evil: that of one lump he makes some vessels of honour, and others of dishonour; that it is neither of him that runneth, nor of

him that willeth, but God that giveth the blessing. But he added, that besides absolute predestination without foreknowledge of works, there is another wherein God hath decreed to save all those that should be converted; and that for that end he had given all men sufficient grace, to which some submit, and others do resist: and that this last election was uncertain, unlimited, conditional, and dependent on the will and works of man; he confessed that his opinion was contrary to that of St. Austin; but he also said, that St. Austin's was contrary to the opinion of all others."

"The second proposition was variously censured according to the diversity of principles; and the proposition was, that the elect could not be damned, nor the reprobate saved. Catarino confessed that the elect could not be damned; but he would not say that the reprobate could not be saved; because God giving them sufficient grace, if they made good use of it, they might be saved. Here the Thomists flourished their distinction, *in sensu composito et in sensu diviso*, and said, that in a sense compounded or complex, the elect could not be damned; but in a sense divided or distinct they might: that is to say, that the elect considered under a decree of election could not be damned; but if considered simply as men, abstractedly from that decree of election, it might be said that they might be damned because they might never have been elected. This distinction raised more mist before the eyes of the prelates, who were neither great philosophers nor divines, than it brought light to the question. The other six propositions were condemned by unanimous consent, particularly that which asserted the perseverance of true saints, and the inadmissibility of righteousness. They alleged the examples of Saul, Solomon, Judas, and others, who had totally fallen from the real righteousness wherewith they had been invested."

"After matters were thoroughly examined, canons and decrees must pass over them. But they were in great perplexity how to do that; every party striving to have the decrees worded in terms that might favour their opinions. Giacomo Cocco, Archbishop of Corfu, was of the mind that no opinion which could be interpreted in a sound sense, should be condemned; and, there-

fore, he desired that all necessary exceptions and limitations should be put in the canons for removing all ambiguity. Others opposed that, saying, that if all interpretations must be inserted, it would render the canons long, tedious, and intricate. But the Bishop of Simigaglia proposed a method which was approved, and followed during the remaining time of the Council. He said that there ought to be made in the first place a decree of doctrine, which should be divided into chapters; that therein the doctrine of the Church should be declared in a style and method capable to give content to all Catholics: and that then another decree ought to be made containing nothing but the canons and anathemas against heretics. The legate Cardinal, Santa Croce, applied all his pains and skill in the composing of these decrees: and laboured in it with so much success, that he gave content to all; because he worded them with so much ambiguity, that every party found their opinions therein. But this was not done without trouble; for there were above a hundred congregations as well of divines as prelates held about it, and from the beginning of September until the end of November, there past not a day wherein the Cardinal did not peruse his decrees, and alter something in them. In a word, they found a means to satisfy the Scotists and the Thomists, Catarino and his adherents, who stood for the certainty that one may have of his own justification, and those that opposed it. The decrees were so artificially contrived to please all, that Dominico à Soto immediately after wrote three books, *de naturà et gratià*, and found all his opinions in the decisions of the Council. And nevertheless, Andreas de Vega, a famous condelier, on the other hand composed fifteen large books upon the same subject, and found all his opinions in the same decrees, though they were quite opposite to the sentiments of Soto."—Jurien's History of the Council of Trent, book ii. p. 130—135. Quoted by Mr. Fletcher, in the Appendix to his Lectures on the Roman Catholic Religion.

NOTE (V.)

"But enough of this: I desire, in the second place, it may be considered, what the sense of the primitive and best Christians

was as to this matter ; how did they practise and advise as to people's reading of the Scriptures? Why every body that is in the least versed in the histories of those times, knows what a mighty value all the Christians of the early ages set upon the Bible, above all other things. They joyfully heard it read in their publick assemblies, and they diligently read it, and studied it, and meditated upon it in their private houses. They would, several of them, have it read to them, even while they were taking their ordinary food. They took care not only to read it, but to get several portions of it by heart. They instructed their young children in it; and instances we have of those that both knew the Scriptures and inquired into the sense of them, even from their childhood. In those days, as St. Jerome tells us, 'any one, as he walked in the fields, might hear the plowman at his hallelujahs, and the labourers in the vineyard singing David's Psalms.' And the same Father tells us, 'That of those many virgins that lived with Paula, (a famous devout lady in those days,) it was not allowed to any of them to be ignorant of the Psalms, or to pass over one day without learning some part of the Scripture.' And to such a degree were the women of that time skilled in the Scripture, that Julian the apostate lays it as a charge, as a matter of accusation against the Christians. Lastly, such a veneration had the Christians in those days for the Bible, that they esteemed and prized it above any thing in the world; and would rather part with their lives than deliver it up to the Pagan officers that came to demand it of them. And whoever did deliver up their Bibles, were always accounted as apostates.

"And lest any one should suspect that this diligence of theirs, in reading the Scriptures, was rather an effect of the people's forwardness to meddle with things above them, than any thing they were advised and directed to by their spiritual guides, there are sufficient proofs to the contrary. The devout people, in those days, were not more forward to read and learn the Scriptures, than the Bishops and guides of the Church were to exhort them to it, and encourage them in it. St. Augustin thus speaks to the people, 'Think it not sufficient that ye hear the Scriptures in the Church, but also in your houses at home, either read them

yourselves, or get some other to read to you.' Origen saith, 'Would to God, we would all do as it is written, search the Scriptures.' St. Chrysostom says to the people, 'I admonish you, I beg of you to get books.' And again, 'Hearken to me, ye laymen: ye men of the world. Get ye the Bible, that most wholesome remedy of the soul. If ye will do nothing else, yet at least get the New Testament, the Gospels, St. Paul's Epistles, and the Acts of the Apostles, that they may be your continual teachers.' Lastly, so far was that father from confining the use of the Bible to men in holy orders, that he doubts not to affirm, 'that it was as necessary to be read by laymen, as by those who were professed monks.' Nay, if we will believe him, much more necessary: for these are his words, 'Ye think the reading of the Holy Scripture belongeth only unto monks, whereas, in truth, it is much more necessary for you than for them.'"—Archbishop Sharpe, vol. vii. pp. 72—74.

NOTE (W.)

The following are some of the testimonies adduced from the ancient Fathers by Mr. Faber, to establish the sole authority of Scripture as a rule of faith.

"The disposition of our salvation we know not through any other persons, than those by whom the Gospel has come to us: which then, indeed, they themselves orally preached; but which afterwards, according to the will of God, they traditionally handed down to us in the *written* word, as the future basis and column of our faith." Irenæus. *Non enim per alios dispositionem salutis nostræ cognovimus, quam per eos per quos evangelium pervenit ad nos: quod quidem tunc præconiauerunt; postea vero, per Dei voluntatem, in Scripturis nobis tradiderunt fundamentum et columnam fidei nostræ futuram.*—Iren. *advers. Hær.* lib. iii. c. 1. p. 169.

"We, following one only true God as our teacher, and having his discourses as the rule of truth, always say the same things respecting the same matters." Irenæus. *Nos autem unum et solum verum Deum doctorem sequentes, et regulam veritatis haben-*

tes ejus sermones, de iisdem semper eadem dicimus. Iren. adv. Hæres. lib. iv. c. 69. p. 300.

“As for Hermogènes, let his shop produce the *written* word. If he be unable to produce the *written* word in substantiation of his tenets, let him fear that woe which is destined to those who either add to it, or who detract from it.” Tertullian. *Scriptum esse doceat Hermogenis officina. Si non est scriptum, timeat vœ illud adjicientibus aut detrahentibus destinatum.*—Tertull. *adv. Hermog.* sect. xii. Oper. p. 346.

“There is one God, whom we know from *no other authority than the Holy Scriptures*. For, just as a person, who wished to exercise the wisdom of this world, would not be able to attain it, save by attention to the dogmata of the philosophers: so, if we wish to exercise piety toward God, we can exercise it from no other quarter than from God’s own oracles. Whatsoever matters, then, the divine Scriptures declare, these let us learn: and whatsoever matters they teach, these let us recognise;—not according to our own humour, or according to our own mind, neither with any wresting of the things delivered from God; but even as he himself wished to show us through the Holy Scriptures, thus let us learn.” Hippolytus. Εἷς Θεὸς, ὃν οὐκ ἄλλοθεν ἐπιγιγνώσκουμεν, ἀδελφοί, ἥ ἐκ τῶν ἁγίων γραφῶν. κ. τ. λ.—*Hippol. cont. Noet.* sect. ix. Oper. tom. ii. pp. 12, 13.

“Whence is that pretended tradition? Does it descend from the authority of the Lord and the Gospels: or does it come down from the mandates and letters of the Apostles? God testifies that those things are to be done which are *written*:—if, then, any such precept can be found, either in the Gospel, or in the Epistles and Acts of the Apostles,—let this divine and holy tradition be observed.” Cyprian. *Unde est ista traditio? Utrumne de dominica et Evangelica auctoritate descendens, an de Apostolorum mandatis atque epistolis veniens? Ea enim facienda esse, quæ scripta sunt, Deus testatur—Si ergo aut in Evangelio præcipitur, aut in Apostolorum epistolis aut actibus continetur:—observetur divina hæc et sancta traditio.*—Cyp. *Epis.* lxxiv. Oper. tom. ii. p. 211.

“Respecting the divine and holy mysteries of the faith, not even a tittle ought to be delivered without the authority of the *Holy Scriptures*. Neither ought any thing to be propounded, on the basis of mere credibility, or through the medium of plausible ratiocination. Neither yet repose the slightest confidence in the bare assertions of me your Catechist, unless you shall receive from the *Holy Scriptures* full demonstration of the matters propounded. For the security of our faith depends, not upon verbal trickery, but upon demonstration from the *Holy Scriptures*.” Cyril of Jerusalem. Δεῖ γὰρ περὶ τῶν θείων καὶ ἁγίων τῆς πίστεως μυστηρίων, μηδὲ τὸ τυχόν ἄνευ τῶν θείων παραδίδοσθαι γραφῶν. κ. τ. λ.—*Cyrl. Hieros. Catech.* iv. p. 30.

“The holy and divinely inspired *Scriptures* are sufficient for the declaration of the truth.”—Αὐτάρκεις μὲν γὰρ εἰσιν αἱ ἅγια καὶ θεόπνευσται γραφαί, πρὸς τὴν τῆς ἀληθείας ἀπαγγελίαν.—*Athan. Orat. cont. Gent. Oper.* tom. i. p. 1.

“Let a person solely learn the matters, which are set forth in the *Scriptures*; for the demonstrations contained in them, are, in order to the settling of this point, quite sufficient and complete.” Athanasius. Μόνον τὰ ἐν ταῖς γραφαῖς μαθανέτω. ἀντάρκη γὰρ καὶ ἱκανὰ τὰ ἐν αὐταῖς κείμενα περὶ τούτου παραδείγματα.—*Athan. ad Serap. Spirit. S. non esse Creat. Oper.* tom. i. p. 359.

“If ye are disciples of the Gospels,—walk according to what is *written*. But if you choose to allege any other matters beyond what is *written*; why do you contend against us, who will never be persuaded either to hear or to speak a single syllable beyond God’s written word?” Athanasius. Εἰ τοίνυν μαθηταὶ ἐστε τῶν εὐαγγελίων,—στοιχεῖτε τοῖς γεγραμμένοις καὶ γενομένοις. Εἰ δὲ ἕτερα παρὰ τὰ γεγραμμένα λαλεῖν βούλεσθε, τί πρὸς ἡμᾶς διαμάχεσθε, τοὺς μήτε ἀκοῦειν μήτε λέγειν παρὰ τὰ γεγραμμένα πειθομένους; *Athen. de Incarn. Christ. Oper.* tom. i. p. 484.

“What the *written* word has never revealed, you will never be able to discover.” Athanasius. Ὁ γὰρ οὐκ εἶπεν ἡ γραφή, οὐχ εὐρήσεις. *Athan. de S. Trin. Dial.* ii. *Oper.* tom. ii. p. 172.—*Orthodoxus loquitur.*

“As we deny not the things which are *written*, so the things which are *not written*, we reject. We believe that God was born

of a virgin, because we read it ; but, that Mary was married after her parturition, we believe not, because we read it not." Jerome. *Ut hæc quæ scripta sunt, non negamus, ita ea, quæ non sunt scripta, renuimus. Natum Deum esse de virgine credimus, quia legimus: Mariam nupsisse post partum, non credimus quia non legimus. Hieron. adv. Helvid. c. ix. Oper. tom. ii. p. 116.*

"Learn, then, in the divine *Scriptures*, through which alone you can understand the full will of God, that some things are prohibited, and that other things are commanded, that some things are granted, and that other things are persuaded." Jerome. *Scito itaque, in Scripturis divinis, per quas solas potes plenam Dei intelligere voluntatem, prohiberi quædam, præcipi quædam, concedi aliqua, nonnulla suaderi.—Hieron. ad Demetriad. de Virgin.—Oper. tom. ix. p. 4.*

"The things which are *written* believe ; the things which are *not written*, seek not after." Basil. *Τοῖς γεγραμμένοις πιστεῦτε τὰ μὴ γεγραμμένα μὴ ζήτετε.*—Basil. Homil. de Trin. xxix.

"Demonstrate from any one of the canonical Apostles and Prophets, the truth of what Cyprian has written to Jubaianus : and I should then have no room for contradiction. But now, since what you produce is not canonical ; through the liberty to which the Lord has called us, I receive not the decision even of a man, whose praise I cannot attain unto, with whose writings I presume not to compare my own writings, whose genius I love, with whose eloquence I am delighted, whose charity I admire, whose martyrdom I venerate." Augustin. *Ac per hoc, si ea, quæ commemorasti, ab illo ad Jubaianum scripta, de aliquo Apostolorum vel Prophetarum canonico recitares : quod omnino contradicerem, non haberem. Nunc vero, quoniam canonicum non est quod recitas, eâ libertate ad quam nos vocavit Dominus, ejus viri cujus laudem consequi non valeo, cujus multis literis mea scripta non comparo, cujus ingenium diligo, cujus ore delector, cujus caritatem miror, cujus martyrium veneror, hoc quod aliter sapuit non accipio. August. cont. Crescon. Grammat. lib. ii. c. 32. Oper. tom. vii. p. 160.*

"Why adduce you the authority of Cyprian for your schism, and yet reject his example for the peace of the Church ? Who knows

not that the holy canonical Scripture, whether of the Old or of the New Testament, is comprehended within its own certain limits? Who knows not, that, to all later Episcopal letters it is so preferred, as to exclude any permission of rising doubt or dispute, whether whatsoever is written in it be true or right? But, as for the letters of Bishops, which either are written or were written after the confirmation of the Canon; if peradventure there be found in them any deviation from the truth, we may freely correct them, either by the weightier discourse of more skilful theologians, or by the better instructed prudence of other Bishops, or by the collective intervention of Councils. So again, national or provincial Councils ought, indisputably, to yield to the authority of plenary Councils, which are collected out of the whole Christian world: and plenary Councils themselves may often be amended by later Councils; when, through better experience, that which was shut is opened, and that which lay hid is known." Augustin. *Cur auctoritatem Cypriani pro vestro schismate assumitis, et ejus exemplum pro Ecclesiæ pace respuitis? Quis autem nesciat, sanctam Scripturam canonicam, tam Veteris quam Novi Testamenti, certis suis terminis contineri, eamque omnibus posterioribus Episcoporum literis ita præponi, ut de illâ omnino dubitari et disceptari non possit, utrum verum vel utrum rectum sit, quicquid in eâ scriptum esse constiterit: Episcoporum autem literas, quæ post confirmatum canonem vel scriptæ sunt vel scribuntur, et per sermonem forte sapientiorum cujuslibet in eâ re peritioris, et per aliorum Episcoporum graviolem auctoritatem doctioremque prudentiam, et per concilia, licere reprehendi, si quid in eis forte à veritate deviatum est: et ipsa concilia, quæ per singulas regiones vel provincias fiunt, plenariorum conciliorum auctoritati quæ fiunt ex universo orbe Christiano, sine ullis ambagibus cedere: ipsaque plenaria sæpe priora posterioribus emendari; cum, aliquo experimento rerum, aperitur quod clausum erat, et cognoscitur quod latebat.*—August. de Baptism. cont. Donatist. lib. ii. c. 3. Oper. tom. vii. p. 37.

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